F 97
5
Peach
Unknown Devon
1.8.33
DB

12 MSC B3967

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
LIBRARY SERVICE

Author

Title

BOOK STORE

Books or discs must be returned on or before the last date stamped on label or on card in book pocket. Books or discs can be renewed by telephone, letter or personal call unless required by another reader. After library hours use the Ansafone Service (01-698 7347). For hours of opening and charges see notices at the above branch, but note that all lending departments close at 1 pm on Wednesday and all libraries are closed on Sundays, Good Friday, Christmas Day, Bank Holidays and Saturdays prior to Bank Holidays.

METROPOLITAN
SPECIAL COLLECTION

LASER due:
1/5/71 + 2
LAMBETH

UNKNOWN DEVON

THE COUNTY SERIES

"I hope this series will eventually embrace every English county—if the future volumes keep up the standard of those already published there will be no more delightful series on the market."—RICHARD KING, in the "Tatler."

UNKNOWN KENT. By DONALD MAXWELL
Illustrated in colour and black and white by the author

UNKNOWN SUSSEX. By DONALD MAXWELL
Illustrated in colour and black and white by the author

UNKNOWN SURREY. By DONALD MAXWELL
Illustrated in colour and black and white by the author

UNKNOWN ESSEX. By DONALD MAXWELL
Illustrated in colour and black and white by the author

UNKNOWN NORFOLK. By DONALD MAXWELL
Illustrated in colour and black and white by the author

UNKNOWN SUFFOLK. By DONALD MAXWELL
Illustrated in colour and black and white by the author

UNKNOWN DORSET. By DONALD MAXWELL
Illustrated in colour and line by the author

UNKNOWN WARWICKSHIRE. By M. DORMER HARRIS
Illustrated in colour and black and white by J. E. Duggins

UNKNOWN CORNWALL. By C. E. VULLIAMY, F.R.G.S.
Illustrated in colour and black and white by Charles Simpson, R.I., R.O.I.

UNKNOWN HAMPSHIRE. By CLIVE HOLLAND, Author of "Warwickshire," "Wessex," etc.
Illustrated in colour and black and white by Douglas Snowdon

UNKNOWN DEVON. By L. DU GARDE PEACH
Illustrated in colour and line by Gyrth Russell

THE BODLEY HEAD

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/unknowndevon0000ldug

THE CLIFFS, HARTLAND QUAY

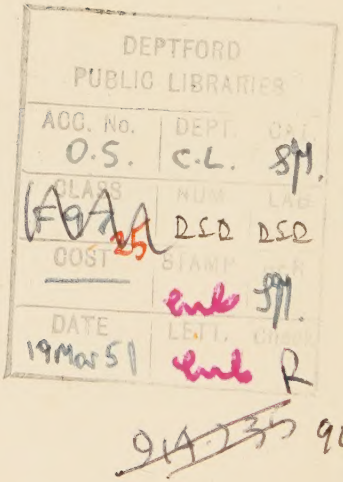
UNKNOWN DEVON

BY L. DU GARDE PEACH

ILLUSTRATED BY GYRTH RUSSELL

LONDON:
JOHN LANE THE BODLEY HEAD LIMITED

First Published in 1927


DEPTFORD
PUBLIC LIBRARIES
ACC. No. O.S.
DEPT. C.L.
CLASS
NUM.
LAB.
DSD DSD
COST
STAMP
DATE 19 Mar 51
LETT.
CHKD
B396857
914.235 942.35

MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
BY JARROLD AND SONS, LTD., NORWICH

FOREWORD

THIS is a book about Devon ; not all of Devon or indeed, it may chance, much of Devon, if it be brought to the cold test of the surveyor's tape. It is not a guide book, nor do I pretend to direct or advise the footsteps of any man, for the tastes and inclinations of men do vary as widely as the several colours of their hair or eyes.

This volume is, for what it may be worth, a personal record. In it I shall write of such places as have pleased me, even though they may please none other, and I shall try to place on record such incidents and occasions as stay in my memory ; my reader must hold himself ready for the strangest turns about if such be my whim, and I cannot guarantee him against what may be, to him, tedious sojourns in dull little towns which have for me a flavour.

It may be, after all, that there is more pleasure in the writing of such a book as this than in the reading of it. As it grows under my hand I shall live again many days out of the past, which no words of mine, or indeed of any man's, could make as real to you as they are to me ; I shall walk down deep Devon lanes peopled with the ghosts of those days. It is a mixed company, that ghostly assemblage, and I suspect its members of intent to wander in and out of my book. For my part they will be welcome.

This book is called "Unknown Devon," and there is a very great deal of Devon which may truly, as far as the average wanderer is concerned, be so described. Torquay he knows, and he has passed through Exeter, maybe spent a night there; he has perhaps taken ship at Plymouth or fished a little on the fringes of Dartmoor; if he be a motorist, he has probably taken his car along the north coast, for the fun of climbing Porlock (which is in Somerset, but on the way), Countisbury Hill, Beggar's Roost and Parracombe, and he may have rested or—it sounds sinister, but I know those hills—left his car for repairs at Lynmouth or Ilfracombe. But of the rest of Devon most people know little or nothing. I admit that some of them look out of the carriage windows as the Great Western Railway takes them down to the Cornish Riviera, but Devon is not to be seen like that.

It is of that unknown Devon that I propose to write. For years I have lived in it and loved it. I have tramped its coast and moors and persuaded my car down many of its almost inaccessible by-roads; I have slept out under the stars on its hilltops, and made my abiding-place by little moorland streams; I am an authority on squab-pie, clotted cream and cider.

These are the qualifications that I bring to this task.

EXETER, 1926

CONTENTS

		PAGE
I.	Along the Seaboard	1
II.	Concerning Estuaries	75
III.	Heather and Ling	119
IV.	River Banks	153
V.	Across Devon	177
	Index	201

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

IN COLOUR

Hartland Bay		*Frontispiece*
		PAGE
Bucks Mills	*facing*	26
Beer	„	36
Brixham	„	54
Shaldon	„	108
A Byre	„	140
Steps Bridge	„	164
Newton St. Cyres	„	190

IN LINE

Lynmouth Light	8
Woody Bay	10
Fifteenth-century Circular Stair, Lee Manor	15
Croyde Bay	16
By the Roadside, Croyde	17
Bucks Mills	21
A One-night Stand	24
A One-night Stand	25
The Road to Hartland Quay	26
Ruins, Hartland Quay	27
Hartland Church	28
Lych-gate, Hartland Church	29

PAGE

A Corner in Hartland 31
Welcombe Mouth 32
An Ancient of Beer 34
Branscombe 35
A Grocery, Branscombe 36
A Glimpse of the Sea over Sidmouth 37
The Cove, Ladram Bay 38
Under the Chestnuts, Otterton 45
East Budleigh 51
Brixham 59
The Boat-builder's, Brixham 60
Beesands 67
Exmouth Bight from Orcombe 83
The "Stellundæ" in Difficulties 88
Topsham Lock 90
Under the Church Wall, Topsham 91
Appledore Quay 94
Bideford Bridge 100
The Watch Tower, Appledore 104
The Butterwalk, Dartmouth 113
Brent Tor 122
Near Princetown 124
A Doorway, Gidleigh 125
Stone Circle, Gidleigh Common 126
Approach to Dartmoor from the South-east 128
Dunsford 131
The March of Progress at Moretonhampstead 133
Spinster Rock, Drewsteignton 134

PAGE

A Keeper's Cottage, Haldon 142
The Ley Arms, Kenn 143
Peak Hill, from Woodbury Common 144
Gargoyles, Ottery St. Mary 147
Gittisham Church 148
South Tower, Ottery St. Mary 149
Stepping Stones, Gittisham 151
Exminster Church 152
Bridge at Bovey Tracey 157
The Torridge at Torrington 158
Bridge at Hartland Abbey 161
The Plym at Wigford Down 174
Glasshouse Lane, Countess Weir 183
Winkleigh 192
The Torridge above Torrington 195
Wear Gifford 197
The Torridge at Wear Gifford 198
Village Worthies 199

I

ALONG THE SEABOARD

I

ALONG THE SEABOARD

THIS is not the story of a pilgrimage; I did not set out conscientiously to "do" the coasts of Devon. Indeed, I do not know that I ever set out conscientiously to "do" anything; I dislike the habit.

But I have loafed and wandered and camped here, there and everywhere along the Devon coasts, so much so that it is hard now to set into any sort of order the multitudinous pictures which my mind holds. Dozens of little combes rise before me, and very many snug, sheltered hollows where I have set up my tent for the night; I can see beaches shining with white pebbles in the sun, like Ladram and Beer and Budleigh Salterton, or stretches of yellow sand, like Woolacombe and Dawlish Warren and Croyde; there are combes leading steeply to little coves of tumbled rock or sharp, jagged reefs, like Lee and Combe Martin and Hartland, and sometimes great cliffs rise sheer from the deep green water.

Nowhere else in England, I think, is it possible to find quite the same tropical luxuriance of foliage running to the water's edge as is to be found in many parts of Devon. Lynmouth is almost hidden by the trees clinging to the steep hillside which separates it from Lynton high above; Woody Bay, a mile or two westwards from Lynton, is a glory of

trees; Clovelly, quaint and beautiful as its single street is, remains for me a magnificently timbered hillside, where the lower trees and the high tides meet. But as you approach and round Hartland Point the character of the country changes, and Devon becomes more like the uplands of Cornwall. Trees are scarce, save only in the combes, and the cliffs which throw back the Atlantic rollers are as rugged and savage as Land's End. Hartland Point is another Tintagel in its ferocious grandeur.

This is a county of sudden surprises, spendthrift in its contrasts. It is richly agricultural, richer in its virgin red soil than perhaps any other county in England, and then, suddenly, it is maritime, and the pastures give place to the blue sea, the second home of Devon men since history became articulate.

One is sometimes tempted to wonder why Devon men have always been great sailors. So often it is a barren mainland which has driven its sons to the hard life of the sea, and there is nothing barren about the soil of Devon. It is hard to understand why, when earth is so beautiful, men should always have been eager to leave it—but then, in Devon, the sea is beautiful too; it is not earth which is hostile, but the sea which is too alluring. And yet it may be that Devon men, with the most beautiful of counties for their homeland, have, by so much, desired the more passionately to keep the invader from their shores, and have taken to the sea, the better to defend their unique heritage.

It is facts, however, which ultimately must always outface

speculation, and as you travel the coasts of Devon you are treading the soil for which some of England's greatest sailors have fought and died. Not all have achieved the living fame of Drake and Raleigh and Richard Grenville, their lives maybe have missed that ingredient of spectacular heroism which touches the popular imagination, but the memorials in the little seaboard churches are their witnesses. The seaboard of Devon is the forcing house of Empire.

This is not, I repeat, a pilgrimage, yet one must start somewhere.

I remember climbing up from Porlock village one misty April morning, with time my friend and the whole of the coast of the western peninsula before me. I have climbed that hill many times ; once notably in early August when the bell heather on the slopes of Exmoor was so vividly purple that it hurt the eyes to look at it ; but, if you please, we will climb out of the April mists which hang over the rich alluvial flats between Porlock and the estuary, up to the sunshine of the hilltops. Porlock grows smaller and smaller, diminished to a cluster of dolls' houses, now on the right hand and now on the left as the road winds and climbs, until a final hairpin bend hides it altogether.

Once on to the hilltops the whole broad expanse of the Bristol Channel lies stretched out on the right, with here and there toy ships swimming, so it seemed, in mid air, for the mist obscures still the Welsh shore, and the broad waters have no visible horizon. I have stood many thousands of feet above sea-level, high above the spreading glaciers of

the Swiss Alps, and seen the Bernese Oberland spread out at my feet like a countryside modelled in coloured clay, but I do not think that even there the impression of space unrolled was so strong as it is upon the northern edge of Exmoor, with the Bristol Channel half-veiled in mist.

This is a fine road, a fine way of approach to Devon. Up to thirteen hundred feet you must climb, with the rolling brown hills of Exmoor Forest for company, until a turn and a rise in the road bring you to a lonely house and a gateway. And here is a post with written upon the one side SOMERSET and upon the other DEVON !

Then comes soon a steep drop, with many sinister notices addressed to the touring motorist, and the tiny little town of Lynmouth lies at your feet.

Of all the little sea-coast towns of Devon, Lynmouth has always seemed to me to be the most un-English. It does not consciously imitate the villages of the Mediterranean seaboard, which it resembles; it is simply that circumstances and a particular environment have conspired in this impression. The older part of Lynmouth consists only of a few cottages, several of them now converted into a charming little quayside hotel, grouped by the old breakwater. Indeed, until the coming of a new generation of hotel and villa builders, undaunted by the task of underpinning precipitous slopes in the search for firm foundations, there was room for no more. Lynmouth is literally wedged into its little valley, and the later invaders had perforce to straggle up the hillsides. This is a well-wooded combe, running far inland

among the bare hills of Exmoor, and dividing almost at once into two valleys, each with its boulder-strewn stream. Southey with that conscientious appreciation of the wild and rugged which characterized the Romantic Revival in English Poetry, has left the customary verbose and artificial description for the confounding of posterity. To say truth, these combes are pleasant enough places in which to stroll when the day is hot, but they are tedious places in which to walk far; those who wish to emulate the poet and do their duty by the natural beauties of Watersmeet will no doubt find in an easy conscience a balm for bruised and sprained ankles.

For my part, I am content at Lynmouth to sit in the twilight on the end of the breakwater, with my back to the Channel, and watch the lights come out on the hillside. In the spring of the year, before the summer visitors have descended upon Lynmouth, it is one of the most peaceful spots and occupations I know. It is at this hour, when the ostentatious façades of some of the hotels are mercifully hidden by the dusk, and only their twinkling lights are visible, that Lynmouth is like a dream town, not of this earth. Above the vast mass of the Exmoor hills the stars come out one by one.

I deeply regret that the little lighthouse at the shoreward end of the breakwater now carries a prosaic electric light; Mr. Edison has surely something to answer for here. On the top of it is an old iron basket, in which, once upon a time, there would be, every evening, a glowing fire. Think of it! The jolly fires which night watchmen light outside their

LYNMOUTH LIGHT

little huts by the roadside are romantic enough, but imagine one of them elevated to the top of an old stone lighthouse, with the black figure of the watchman himself silhouetted against the shower of sparks which fly as he throws on more logs. I wonder whether Southey stayed long enough in Lynmouth to see this; if he did, his painstaking pen has missed recording the fact.

Another un-English accent is supplied by the funicular railway which joins Lynmouth with Lynton, high above. It is no doubt an easy way of arriving at Lynton, but personally I distrust *funis*—a cord—and nothing will induce me to avail myself of the English, any more than the Swiss, variety. But it is a stiff pull to the top.

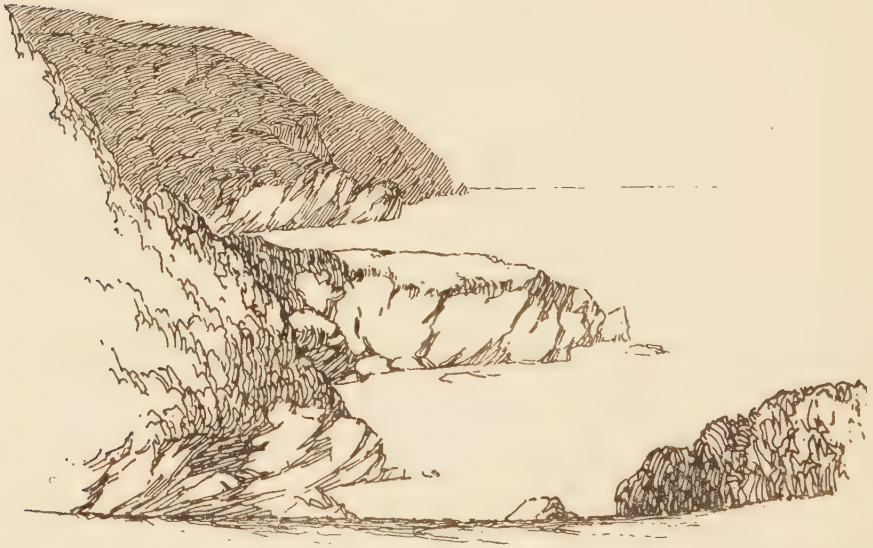
Lynton is almost entirely a new village, though the church is old, and it has little to recommend it save the undoubted efficiency of its hotels and the view over the estuary. But these, between them, constitute a good deal. And Lynton is a good place to get out of; from it, for instance, a very wonderful cliff path leads westward to Woody Bay and the coast road which drops down finally to Hunter's Inn.

One finds oneself inclining towards superlatives when one attempts the task of describing these cliff paths of Devon, whether they be along the rugged northern and western coasts or the gentler, more colourful combes and red cliffs of the south. It is a hopeless task in words, hopeless even in line. There is something heady about this hanging between the vast emptiness of the sky above and the great shining expanse of the Channel below ; one concentrates for relief, upon the little things by the wayside ; a handful of bilberries is of the kindly familiar earth. Haroun al-Raschid's donkey ate carrots ; there is perspective in it.

In sober earnest, it is a magnificent walk, this from Lynton to Woody Bay, to Lee Abbey and the tumbled waste of fallen crags which lie about the base of Castle Rock. Here is more evidence of that dramatic sense of contrast with which Devon presents itself to the wanderer—dramatic but serene, unconscious, even sometimes a little disdainful. One arrives at Hunter's Inn chastened in spirit ; it is pleasant to put out one's hands and touch four walls again.

There is much that is beautiful on this northern coast, much even to-day which is unspoiled, but in this category I would not include Combe Martin. This is a queer, straggling village of a single street, a mile in length, and, with the exception of a beautiful old church and an incredibly unstable-looking inn, each furlong is more drearily uninteresting than the last. Hurry through Combe Martin ; beyond it is a pleasant little cove where you may sit and remember the importance which once attached to this dull little place.

I am writing these words high up amongst the hills and dales of the High Peak of Derbyshire, and it is interesting to remember that Edward I transferred many hundreds of lead miners from Derbyshire to Combe Martin, there to toil in the silver mines which are still supposed locally to be



WOODY BAY

worth the working; it is perhaps characteristic of the combined sloth and shrewdness of the Devonian that no one attempts to work them. But minted silver dug up at Combe Martin has more than once been current in the realm, and several of our bankrupt monarchs, including Elizabeth and Charles I, have tapped this hidden wealth with more or less

success. They were great borrowers, both of them, and a silver mine conveniently exacts no repayment, a fact which appealed strongly to the parsimonious Elizabeth no less than the bankrupt Charles. Henry V, another royal borrower, also drew considerable sums from these mines, and with them financed his various expeditions against France.

As far as I can discover, Combe Martin now does nothing but act as a sort of humble relation to Ilfracombe, gathering gratefully such crumbs as are crowded out of the seaside resort during the summer months. I do not know whether the village makes much out of this, but it is probably more lucrative than digging silver for princes; at least Combe Martin seems very content.

I like the little headland called Burrow Nose, and Watermouth Castle which overlooks it, though I have a sort of feeling that Watermouth Castle overlooks this jolly little inlet something too jealously. I have never attempted to trespass upon this inviting-looking headland, or to bathe in the enticing waters which it shelters, but I have got the impression that Watermouth Castle would not like me to do either; the place has a *kept* look, though this does not detract from its picturesqueness. It is as perfect a setting for romantic happenings as you would wish to find.

And then Ilfracombe.

After Torquay, Ilfracombe is the best known of Devon seaside resorts; as such it has no place in this book. By no stretch of the imagination could it be described as unknown, and my friend, the Town Clerk, would not thank me if I

attempted to include it in that category. The railroad posters and pamphlets and a dozen guide books have forestalled me.

I should probably have preferred Ilfracombe if I could have visited it with George Eliot and George Henry Lewes in 1856. George Eliot confessed herself "enchanted with Ilfracombe"; it is still beautiful, but its character has changed: it has fallen into line with its rivals for popular favour all round the coast of England. In achieving that popularity—and no one visiting Ilfracombe in August would deny that it is popular—it has lost something of its Devon flavour which it will never regain.

It is the habit of chars-à-bancs to travel the direct road from Ilfracombe to Barnstaple, their next port of call, or at best, if they have a little more time at their disposal, to proceed thither by way of the pleasantly hilly and picturesque road through Braunton. We will, if you please, leave them in undisputed possession of both of those roads, and turn westwards for Lee.

After a climb from Ilfracombe, and a turn or two between rounded hills covered with ling and heather, the road drops steeply towards Lee, past a handful of prettily embowered cottages and a long hedge of flowering fuchsia. Lee and its neighbour, Mortehoe, make some pretence at being fishing villages, but the renown of Ilfracombe has made of them rather the summer refuge of the more fastidious. These are still in possession; the crowds which throng the Ilfracombe promenade, and bring fortunes to its places of amusement,

find little to their taste in Lee or Mortehoe ; the isolation of Woolacombe, with its miles of wonderful sandy beach, is less assured, though its comparative inaccessibility may save it for a few years.

Lee remains in my memory chiefly as a pleasant cluster of cottages, with a primitive sea wall dividing it from a cove full of jagged white rocks and jagged heliotrope smells. No doubt it is health-giving ozone ; the inhabitants at any rate seem little the worse for it.

But it is a cruel bay, as are most of the coves between here and Land's End. Great ridges of sharp-toothed rocks offer little promise of hospitality to the storm-driven sailor ; but, from the very different point of view of one whose whole business is to sit and smoke on their leeward side, there is much to be said for them. Lee is a pleasant little place ; I hope the lane which leads to it, too narrow for the prowling char-à-banc, will not be widened just yet.

" Do you think," I said, " that my car will climb that ? "

The blue-jerseyed fisherman looked at the travel-worn car and at the very steep, very rough road which climbs out of Lee away over the hill to Mortehoe.

" I 'ave seen cars go up en," he said.

" What sort of cars ? "

The fisherman paused a moment for reflection.

" Moty-cars," he said. " But 'tis a rough road."

When a Devon man admits that a road is rough his warning is not lightly to be disregarded, but the spirit of adventure had entered into me, and, I hoped, into the twelve

horses which slept under the bonnet of my car. I rushed at the hill.

It really was almost incredibly steep, and the surface was beyond description.

"No fear of char-à-banc here," I reflected, as I bounced from a boulder into a deep gully, and from the gully on to a great rounded slab of natural outcrop. For a long moment the engine gasped and panted; time stopped and eternity stood on tiptoe; a passing sparrow hawk hung motionless above me, and then, with a lurch and a roar, the engine picked up again and we reached the top.

But my lane had still surprises in store. A hundred yards farther on the lane narrowed, another hundred and it became a grass-grown track running between high Devon banks, and it ended in a gate and a field. I opened the gate and entered into possession of my night's lodgings; the morrow would do for Mortehoe.

Ahead of me the field ran up to a sky-line broken with gorse bushes; just visible over the ridge to my left was the gable of an old farm-house, on my right a little stream had hollowed out a steep combe, and beyond it I could see the line of the sea. It was an ideal camping ground.

But first I climbed to the ridge. At my feet was the corner where the coast of Devon turns southward and first fronts the Atlantic proper; Bull Point, with Morte Point beyond it, and between them the angry jumble of crags known as Rockham Bay; out to sea beyond Morte Point the fatal Morte Stone, black and sinister against the reflection

of the sunset sky. Many good ships have beaten out their lives against that stone, lured to their destruction, as often as not, by errant lights on the cliffside where no lights should be. The people of Lee and Mortehoe were not always as hospitable as they are to-day, and many are the stories told of the Morte Stone, and of ship-wrecked sailors who preferred to face the storms of the Atlantic in open boats rather than the men who lived on this inhospitable shore.

FIFTEENTH-CENTURY CIRCULAR STAIR, LEE MANOR

I do not doubt that my farmer had the blood of wreckers in his veins, but he had outgrown their evil ways. I wish no warmer welcome anywhere than that which I received at the old Manor Farm between Lee and Mortehoe. The rabbits played about my tent door under an August moon all night.

The next day, after a visit of ceremony to the Manor Farm, I dropped down to Mortehoe, with its rocky bay, and passed along the landward side of the wide-stretching sands of Woolacombe. One of these days some enterprising business man will exploit Woolacombe and its wonderful beaches; already there are signs of it.

A rough road and a wicked hill and I was on the hilltops

again, with Baggy Point on my right and the village of Croyde below me. I walked out to Baggy Point once; there are fine cliffs and rocks for scrambling, and tiny coves for bathing, and never a living soul to contest possession.

Croyde is one of the places in which I am going to spend

CROYDE BAY

my declining years. It is an entirely delightful village, unspoiled and, one would almost say, unspoilable, but the modern builder is a fierce fellow. Croyde Bay is perfect: a real bay this, not like Woolacombe or Saunton Sands, a mere ridge of sand. A real bay to delight the eye must curve out to a headland at either end, like Ladram, and

between the headlands the great green rollers should run across hundreds of yards of hard, yellow sand before they break. Such is Croyde Bay, backed by dunes and a gently rising country of incredible greenness. To the north is

BY THE ROADSIDE, CROYDE

Baggy Point, to the south the heights of Saunton Down, crowned with bracken and heather and flaming gorse, rising from a rocky shore.

From the bay the village of Croyde is hidden by the dunes. It is a tiny place with a hospitable little inn, and a

handful of thatched and whitewashed cottages. I have a mental option on one of them. A stream runs through the village, as it should through all properly constituted villages, and some of the cottages have little wooden bridges leading to their doors. I do not know whether the inhabitants of Croyde ever did anything except help in the wrecking business common to the coast, and they probably did that more in sorrow than in anger, not with the hard ruthlessness of the men of Lee and Mortehoe, but nowadays they seem very content to gather at the little bridge and gossip with the casual stranger. Not one of them offered to take me round the bay for a shilling ; Croyde is perfect.

A jolly road, cut in the side of Saunton Down, swings round the hill between a quarry and a coast-guard station, and all of a sudden the great estuary of the Taw and the Torridge lies before you. Rolling miles of sand and burrows lie at your feet, and the long, long lines of the breakers stretch right across to Westward Ho. Hartland Point is a faint blue line in the distance.

This remote north-western corner of Devon is a place to dream in. So much has happened here and, even in this sleepy and unchanging countryside, so little remains to bear witness to a stirring past. A weathered coat of arms over the crumbling doorway of a farm-house, and a few defaced tombs in the grey Norman churches alone are left of the great families to which the Conqueror granted these rich manors, and which, generation after generation, bred the leaders of these soft-voiced Devon yeomen. To the Devon men who

followed them to the farthest corners of the known world there remains no monument but a great tranquillity.

Across the estuary lies Appledore, not to be resisted, and beyond it another stretch of Devon's coast, a hard, iron-bound seaboard, Cornish in its savagery. From Westward Ho round to Clovelly and Hartland Point, and then southward again to Welcombe it runs, a succession of jutting rocky headlands and treacherous bays; the wreckers of Lee and Mortehoe were the merest apprentices beside the men of Hartland.

This is the remotest and least-known corner of Devon. The deserted coast is backed by a rich hinterland, full of sleepy little villages which have never, unlike Appledore and Bideford, awakened for long enough to find a place in the history books. They are still fast asleep, just perhaps turning and muttering a little if they happen to lie by the great highway along which the purposeful motorist does his thirty or forty miles in the hour towards Cornwall.

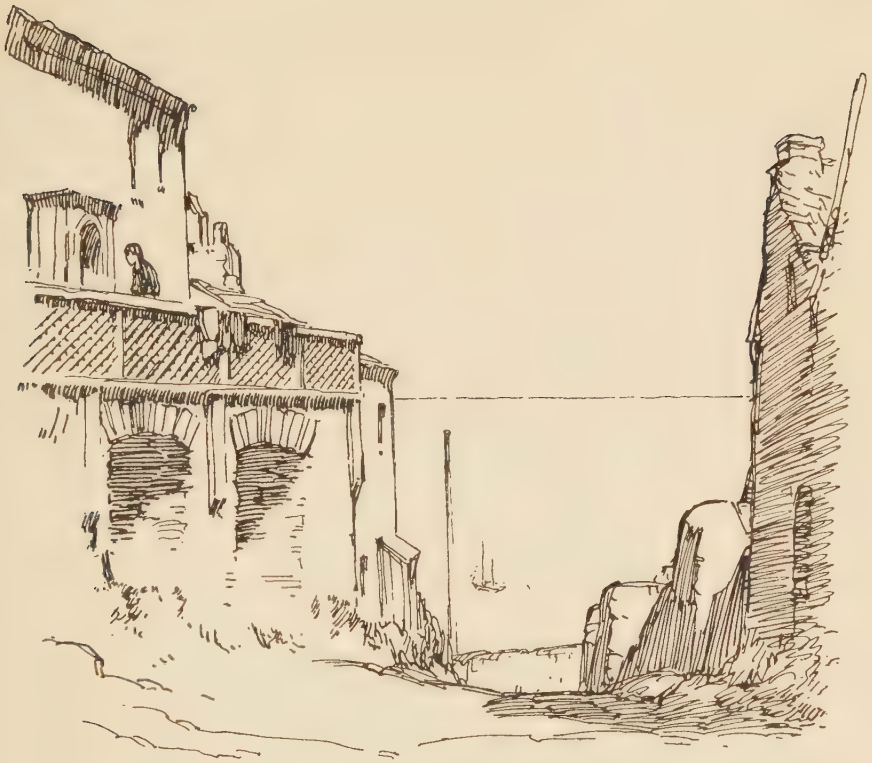
There is a railway at Bideford—the extension round through Westward Ho to Appledore marked on the map no longer exists—and there is a railway at Holsworthy; in the whole countryside lying to the westward of a line drawn between them there are only roads, one, the motorists' highway from Bideford by way of Clovelly Cross to Bude and Cornwall, and a second from Holsworthy via Torrington to Bideford. In addition there is a whole tangle of by-roads and lanes. If there is any part of Devon which is still comparatively uninvaded, it is these sleepy hamlets and villages

out towards Hartland. But their sleep is nearly over; the alarums and excursions—particularly the latter—of this post-war world will see to it.

Bucks Mills has so far resisted invasion, although it possesses all the charm which Clovelly has so suicidally exploited. It lies very close to the motorists' highway, a bare mile down a side lane from Bucks Cross, but the highway is very good just there and most cars go past too quickly to notice the turning. Deptford Public Libraries

Bucks Mills is smaller than Clovelly, but it has the same single steep street dropping to the water's edge. Piled one on top of the other are the pleasant whitewashed cottages which make up the village, and at the foot of the hill is an old stone building which looks as though it might have been a lime-kiln, though there is, so far as I could see, no limestone in the neighbourhood, and no reason for a lime-kiln; it may have been something else. But, whatever it was, it is now a picturesque and partly ruinous tower of ample proportions. The last time I was there some enterpising persons were encamped upon the little patch of grass which has grown on top of it: I envied them their pitch.

Clovelly is, of course, the unchallenged queen of this coast, but I do not like Clovelly. It is too consciously beautiful, it reposes on its cliffside, eternally regarding itself in the mirror of the running tides and saying, "How beautiful I am!" If it stopped at that one might forgive much, but Clovelly is peopled exclusively by the spiritual descendants of those inhabitants of this coast who were wont to prey



BUCKS MILLS

upon the storm-driven mariner. Now the game is an easier and a safer one : the prey comes of its own free will from the rich towns of the north and east. I have not heard recently of stripped and rifled bodies being flung down the cliff, but I have met disconsolate motorists leaving Clovelly after a night or two spent with its hospitable inhabitants.

" 'Tidn' real," they say in Devon of something which is too good to be true. Clovelly " idn' real." " Come," says Clovelly, with an eye to the American market, " cannot we make this cottage a little quainter, or that flight of stone steps a little cuter," and the great work of keeping the village unspoiled by inartistic modern innovations goes on. Clovelly is like a beautiful woman with green hair taking up a collection. One sighs when one thinks what the place might be like if no one had ever heard of it, but it is a very selfish sigh. A great many persons derive a great deal of pleasure every year from visiting Clovelly, and the inhabitants of Clovelly derive a great deal of profit from their visits. It is all a question of supply and demand.

There is no real place for Clovelly in a book on Unknown Devon ; Americans from the Middle West would snort with scorn if they saw the village so labelled. We will to Hartland.

First Hartland Point, and then Hartland itself, Stoke, which so quaintly possesses the church which should belong to Hartland, and Hartland Quay, no quay at all, but a forgotten group of cottages amid a desolation of tumbled crags ; this is more to our taste.

On a perfect evening, with the sun just dropping into the

sea out Lundy way, Gyrth Russell and I pitched our tent at the top of the steep road which drops down to the lighthouse on Hartland Point. Lundy was high, if a little too clear for the promise of fine weather, and the sea was calm as we went down the steep road to the lighthouse itself, but by next morning it was blowing a gale from the westward, with driving squalls of rain, and great breakers were beating at the base of the cliff upon which the lighthouse stands. Here are great shark's-teeth of rocks, grim, knife-edged strata set on end; there are two particularly, the ugliest from the mariner's

A ONE-NIGHT STAND

point of view which I have ever seen, and before the building of the lighthouse this was a famous corner for wrecks. There is a local saying which runs:

> From Padstow Port to Lundy Light,
> A watery grave by day or night.

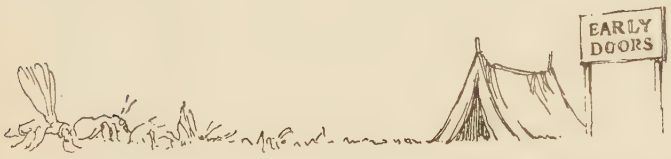
Even now wrecks are frequent, in spite of the warning red and white flashes from the base of the cliffs.

This lighthouse is an interesting piece of work; the site had to be surveyed from the sea, as the cliff face was too

precipitous for human foothold, and a road was afterwards blasted out of the rock to the platform upon which the building now stands. I have several times been all over it by courtesy of its pleasant Welsh custodian, but I should not care to live there ; it must be a very lonely occupation.

It was not lonely up on the top of Hartland Point. Russell has tried to draw some of the things which crawled into our tent during the night, but he has underestimated their number and ferocity.

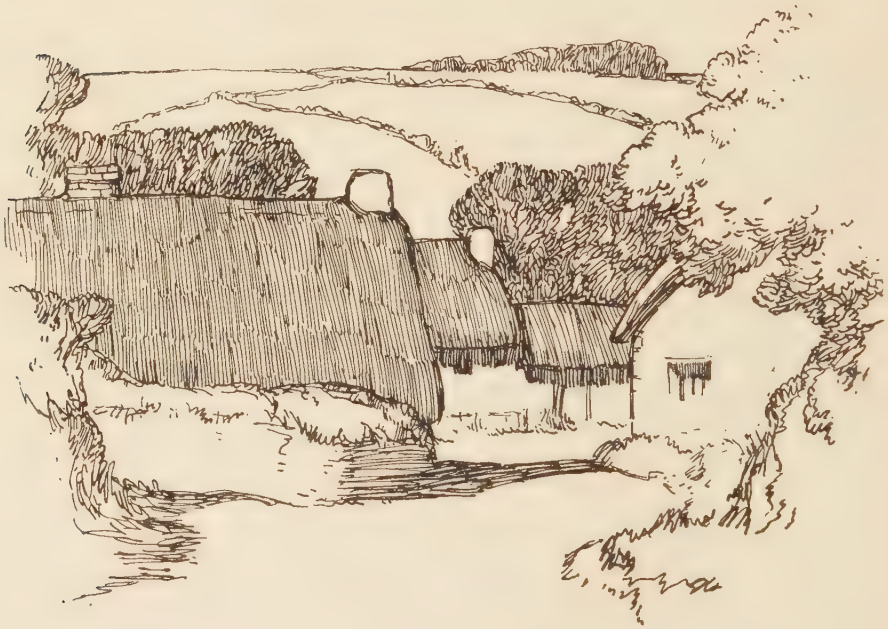
To stand on the top of Hartland Point, near the coast-



A ONE-NIGHT STAND

guard station, and look down upon the great rollers driven by a westerly gale, breaking and foaming amongst the rocks in indescribable confusion, is an unforgettable experience. Neither Tintagel nor Land's End has anything to show finer than this. It is as savage a piece of coast as any on the Atlantic seaboard of Devon or Cornwall, and yet, a couple of hundred yards from the cliff edge, lies one of the snuggest farm-houses you could wish to see, in a sheltered and pleasantly wooded hollow. I shall not soon forget the lemon curd or the clotted cream which we had there.

I think the whole of this coast, and especially that portion of it immediately about Hartland Quay, must be a fascinating playground for the geologist. I am none; for me a rock is simply a rock, nothing more, but even I could not help



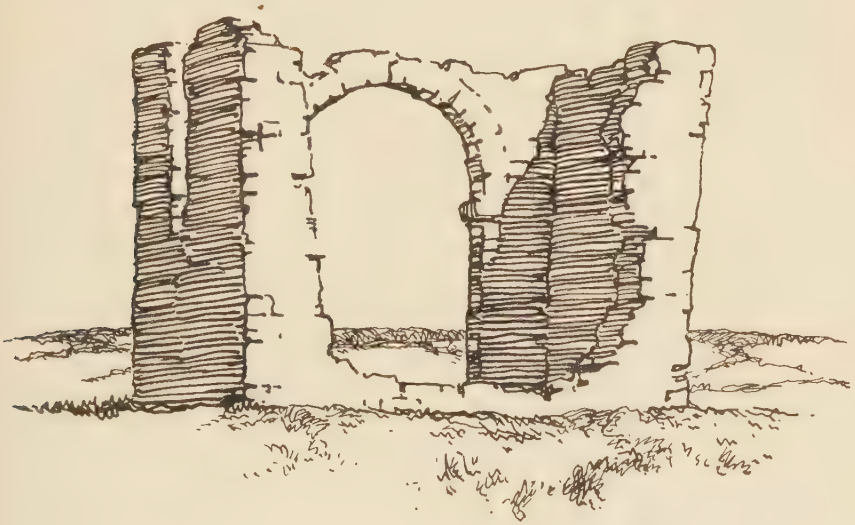
THE ROAD TO HARTLAND QUAY

but feel an almost scientific interest in the amazing antics of the clean-cut strata which diversify the cliff face. In the bay to the north of Hartland Quay they run at every conceivable angle from the horizontal to the perpendicular, with spectacular swirls and points by way of variety, and all

THE QUAY, BUCKS MILLS

within the space of a few hundred yards. There were strange happenings here when this bit of the earth was fashioned.

Hartland Quay deserved its name once; in 1878 the breakwater was still in being, but now it is only with difficulty that its foundations can be traced. It all happened, so the friendly coast-guard informed me, at the death of the local



RUINS, HARTLAND QUAY

squire, who lived at Hartland Abbey, and at whose expense the quay was formerly maintained. I imagine it sheltered little beyond a possible fishing boat and a private pleasure craft or so, but the fact remains that a "liddle tiddy hole," one day's work for a mason, was allowed to remain and extend on the seaward side, until one rough night the sea entered in,

and by morning nothing remained of the breakwater but a few more stones scattered amongst the boulders of this rock-strewn coast. It is a pity; these little breakwaters have a real charm, and that at Hartland Quay, from the pictures which I have seen of it, was exactly like the one so carefully preserved at Clovelly.

HARTLAND CHURCH

Hartland Quay consists of nothing but a tiny hotel and a cottage or two, a little speck of human activity in the midst of this scene of desolation and wild grandeur, but a mile inland is Stoke, and, two miles beyond Stoke, the little town of Hartland.

Stoke is a handful of picturesque cottages and a fine

church, the parish church of Hartland, placed here, so the legend runs, on account of the wanderings of a headless saint. Whether this saint was really looking for Hartland, I do not know; if he was, the mistake may, in the peculiar circumstances, be pardoned.

LYCH-GATE, HARTLAND CHURCH

It is a beautiful church, with a fine square tower which may be seen from many miles out to sea. A magnificent rood screen, extending across the whole width of the church, and a very early Norman font are of interest to antiquarians; the original stiff oak pews, black with age, and with the most uncomfortable seats I have ever tried, are no doubt of interest

to the congregations which gather there. But if one is to judge by the heavy spider's webs which completely filled the doorways into many of these pews, they are not very much used.

I spent a long, peaceful hour in the church. It was very hot outside, and Russell was busy drawing the lych-gate with its group of lime trees; within it was very cool and quiet. I climbed the tower, and a great expanse of rolling country and blue sea lay before and beneath me. I cannot quite say how I managed to get up the tower; a man whom I took to be the verger, and who undoubtedly had the key of the tower in his hand, refused positively to allow me to ascend. It was, he told me, as much as his place was worth. Then, a short half-hour afterwards, a small boy appeared, and without word of explanation, unlocked the door and invited me to accompany him to the top. I never found out why they ordered things thus in Stoke.

Inside the church is a plain stone bearing the following inscription:

IN MEMORY OF
JOHN LANE
PUBLISHER OF LONDON
A DEVOTED SON OF DEVON
HE LIVED TO HELP AND TO INSPIRE
1854–1925

No more fitting resting-place could have been found for John Lane; in this remote corner of Devon he was born,

and, a true son of Devon, he never ceased to love the county which bore him. His name stands here for ever, side by side with those of Devon men of all ages, who in war or peace, men of arms or men of letters, sought no reward but to set an English name to a record of great achievement.

A CORNER IN HARTLAND

This district is so unknown and historically so interesting, that one is tempted to linger, but Devon is large, and there are other coasts.

Hartland is a little market town of no particular charm. It was once upon a time twice the size of Bideford, but its rival has now far outstripped it. I had a long talk one day

with the village blacksmith, who told me stories of the old days when Hartland was remote indeed ; but, beyond the blacksmith, I found little of interest in Hartland. There seems to be a sort of settled melancholy about such places ; I have remarked it also in Torrington and South Molton. Once a week they awake and take on some semblance of life, only to fall again into a sort of sad drowse for six days more.

WELCOMBE MOUTH

From Hartland Quay it is only a few short miles along the rugged coast to Welcombe, just beyond which tiny and utterly sequestered village is Marsland Mouth, a little stream across which is Cornwall. It was here that I fancied I had found the real meaning of the word desolate, until I turned a jutting rock and discovered that the decaying ribs of a forgotten wreck could add a further touch of desolation to what had seemed before to be its ultimate expression. If

I had been an emotional person I should have wept ; instead, I returned to Welcombe and set my face again towards Appledore.

There are four main ways leading into Devon from the east, two of them following the north and south coasts respectively. The traveller with England behind him may enter the county by way of Minehead and Porlock, climbing and crossing the northern end of Exmoor, the broad waters of the Severn on his right hand, and then drop down the steep descent of Countisbury Hill into Lynmouth ; if he has come along the Bath road he will probably pass through Frome and Wells and Glastonbury to Taunton, and so south-westerly to Cullompton and Exeter ; the run across the beautiful Wiltshire Downs will bring him via Ilchester or Yeovil and Chard to Honiton ; but if he elects to travel by one of the oldest trade routes in England, a way trodden by men many thousands of years before the coming of the Roman road-makers, he will come along the south coast.

Dorchester, Bridport and Lyme Regis—names all of them with histories to fill volumes—and Devon lies before him.

It is a very wonderful Devon, too, which greets you as you approach it from Lyme Regis. A steep climb from the little historic port where Monmouth landed brings you to a winding, upland road, rich in bluebells in their season, leading to Sidmouth. Here and there it is possible to catch a glimpse of the sea, a great way off on your left hand, but it is better to make excursion, trusting yourself to some of the little

AN ANCIENT OF BEER

deep-rutted Devon lanes, and go down one or other of the steep combes which lead to the shore.

Seaton is a place in which I can take little interest. Once upon a time, if one is to believe the stories one hears and reads, the little estuary of the Axe, upon which it stands, was a highway for shipping. Quite probably it was one of the most westerly ports used by the Romans, and it supplied ships for that expedition against Calais under Edward III with which the West Country was so unaccountably identified; but all that is many, many hundreds of years ago; a pebble ridge now extends across the mouth of the river, as also across the Otter at Budleigh Salterton, and the one-time harbour is now a silted-up estuary fringed with green pasture. Seaton itself is a busy little seaside town, such as I gladly pass by, the more rapidly because half-way up the hill beyond it, on a corner high above Colyford, I know a gate from which the whole estuary lies below you, far more pleasant to the eye at this distance. Straight across is the little square tower of Axmouth Church and the pleasantly rounded and wooded hills of Uplyme, and to your right a few tall, decorative

trees which hide most of the red offence of present-day Seaton. The top bar of the gate is the right height for a pair of elbows ; I have smoked many a pipe there.

Beer is a different proposition, as the American visitor would say. Tucked snugly between protecting hills, with its little shingle beach and its cluster of fishing boats, lies the village which within living memory was the centre of the

BRANSCOMBE

smuggling for which this part of the coast is so admirably adapted by Nature. If you can find the right person in Beer, as I did, you may hear, through a long summer's evening, enough stories of the " trade," of Jack Rattenbury and his fellows, to satisfy the appetite of the most adventurous. I do not think the makers of English films have discovered Beer and its oldest inhabitant yet ; they will one of these days.

This is a true smuggler's coast. Beer, Branscombe,

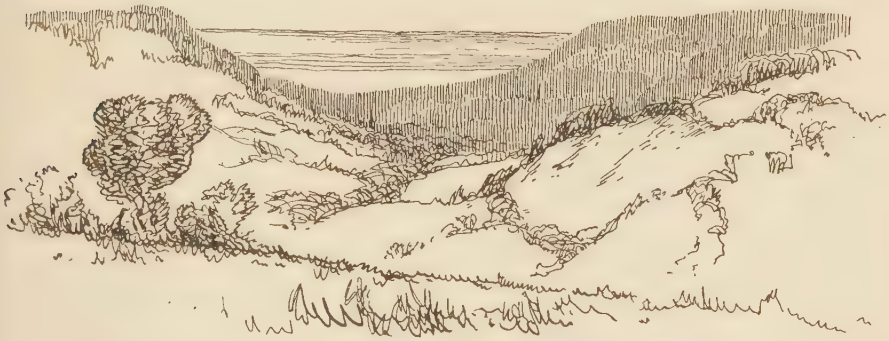
Salcombe Regis, Sidmouth, Ladram Bay, Budleigh Salterton and Littleham Cove, they have all of them been the scenes of encounters with the preventive men, not all so bloodless as those recounted of Jack Rattenbury. Branscombe and Salcombe look to-day much as they did then, and between

A GROCERY, BRANSCOMBE

them is a combe, unnamed so far as I know, which must have made a splendid landing-place for illicit cargoes. The only cargoes I have myself carried up its steep path have been baskets full of the most luscious blackberries, bigger, for some reason, in this combe, than anywhere else I know.

BEER

Here the cliffs change their colour. At Beer and Branscombe they are white, but at Sidmouth they are of the true Devon red; I never really count myself in Devon until the cliffs and the ploughed land are of that colour which I think you will find nowhere else in the world. There are few more pleasant occupations than to watch the plough at work on the green cliffs above and beyond Otterton, turning over this rich red earth, and followed by clouds of white gulls.



A GLIMPSE OF THE SEA OVER SIDMOUTH

Geologists may find much interest in the red and white strata which diversify the face of the cliffs at Branscombe; for me they have another message, not concerned with prehistoric periods, but of this present time. "Devon," they say. "Here is Devon."

Sidmouth I like better than Seaton, though it is a fashionable little place, frequently in debate with the sea as to the real ownership of its promenade. Particularly do I like the

western end of Sidmouth, where some very jolly thatched and gabled houses cling precariously to the hillside. Behind them the road climbs very steeply to the top of Peak Hill, and beyond Peak Hill is Ladram Bay.

THE COVE, LADRAM BAY

I had not visited Ladram Bay for many years when I determined again to make pilgrimage thither, and so I set forth on a summer morning.

Of all the bays that I know Ladram is surely the queen.

The bays of Runswick and Robin Hood in Yorkshire have names that make ballad music ; the bays of Wales rear their white cliffs between the mountains and the sea ; Cornish Bude and St. Ives take the great Atlantic rollers into their embrace and fling them back in foam ; but Ladram Bay in Devon is more beautiful than them all.

It is very tiny. You could sail round the shores of Britain and never see it ; you could follow the coast roads and never find it. But if by chance you should light upon it, then suddenly some new sense of beauty and romance is awakened within you. Nowhere off the coast of this island is the sea so blue ; nowhere do the great cliffs glow with so rich a red ; above, to their very edge, is the sweet, rich grass, green as only Devon grass is green, and at their foot the curved pebble ridge shines with a dazzle of white in the sun. A narrow and tortuous path, deep hollowed in the red sandstone, leads only to the bay. The shades of smugglers walk there on moonless nights.

Set a little distance from the shore at either end of the bay, two great pillars of sandstone rise from the sea. By day they are red and capped with a tangle of green, and the sea-gulls cluster and cry about them, but by night they stand black and stark against a great plain of faintly moving light.

This was the Ladram Bay that glowed in my memory, and so one day I set forth for Ottery St. Mary, for Aylesbeare and Otterton, names of magic and beauty, villages no less beautiful than their names.

There are no names like the names of the countryside of

Devon. They are brave, sweet names, and in their sound is all the honesty of English hearts and the music of English songs. Clyst St. Mary and Clyst St. George, Woodbury and Ottery, Aylesbeare and Otterton, Sampford Peverill and Withycombe Raleigh; they are a part of the old Merrie England, and the gentlemen-adventurers who made and fought for her shaped the sound of them with their lips and loved them with their hearts.

And there are no lanes like Devon lanes. Deep-rutted in the red earth, they twist and turn every way of the wind, and on either hand, banked steeply to the sky, the wild flowers cluster and twine. They are the home of myriads of little humming things, of an infinitude of insect business; only the air is asleep. And then, round this turn or that, of a sudden the sea lies before you, far below. A deep combe leads down to it, and the lane seems to drop sheer into the tangled green.

Through lanes like these I made my pilgrimage. Sometimes they would be deep and strangely quiet, like larger, kindlier trenches, and the level world of fields and trees over the top would seem as far away as it used to do when we lived in holes in the ground in Picardy. And sometimes they would swing up over the shoulder of a hill on to open heath, with here and there little groups of stunted conifers surrounded by crumbling mud walls.

From Peak Hill the road drops down to Otterton, a dream village of white and cream-coloured houses set about an avenue of chestnuts, and it was here first that I began to doubt

the wisdom of my enterprise. I had set out to find Ladram Bay, but now I began to feel doubtful as to whether I wanted to find it at all. It is sometimes dangerous to bring a glowing memory to the touchstone of a concrete fact.

It is a thing which most people have done at some time or another, a mistake which most people have made. It would seem to be a part, almost a necessary part, of the disillusionment of years. Conrad must set out now and then in quest of his youth, and the remembered beauty or the associated happiness of some particular locality is often no less compelling. But memory and the years play strange tricks between them. They modify and refine; the dross slips away unnoticed, until only the pure gold remains.

All this came into my mind as I drew towards Otterton, and I began to fear for the Ladram Bay of my memory. I could see it still in my mind's eye, glowing with impossible colour and rich with the glamour of impossible romance, and as I sat on a bank and pondered my memory, I began to be afraid of what I might see as I dropped down the steep lane over the hill beyond Otterton.

I smoked a pipe on it, whilst the heat of a perfect summer's day in Devon set the trees and bushes quivering. The world lay drowsing in the fierce light of the noonday sun; only the little flying things still went about their myriad affairs, as though afraid to waste a moment of their short lives. And in the drowsy stillness my memory of Ladram was only half of this world; half was of that other dim, beautiful world of which dreams are made.

The shadow of the hedge crept slowly across the road, and I stood up and knocked out my pipe. My mind was made up: I would go no more to Ladram Bay.

I skirted Otterton, and turning my face from the sea, plunged into the gloom of a deep-set lane roofed with tangled trees. I walked at random, taking one lane after another, seeing always in front of me the glowing picture which it was now my purpose to keep untarnished by contact with reality. And my feet, undirected by a mind preoccupied, strayed again towards the sea.

I turned a corner, and the lane, cut deep in the red sandstone, dropped away steeply in front of me. I stopped in momentary confusion, doubtful whether what I saw was real or some queer projection of my imagination, more real than reality. Then with eager steps I hurried forward. The lane became a narrow and tortuous path.

And then, as through a glass two images will focus into one, so the memory I had treasured and the reality I had found merged into a new perfection.

Ladram Bay is, after all, but one of a succession of coves and combes which make of this south coast of Devon a constant delight. Not everywhere is it easy to find paths leading to the seashore, but it is, on the other hand, never difficult to come to the cliff edge and look down into little red-girt bays, half full of the sea-washed wreckage of former landslides. Most of these little bays afford a few square yards of sand, if you are patient enough to wait for the sea to uncover it, and all are full of crying and wheeling gulls,

which nest in their season in the cracks and crannies of the red cliff walls.

They present a very wonderful contrast in colours, these little bays, far more colourful than the wicked-looking coves of North Devon. Round Ladram and Peak Hill and past Budleigh Salterton, towards Exmouth, the cliffs are of a very surprising redness, and beyond the estuary of the Exe the same rich colour characterizes the cliffs which stand up beside Dawlish and Teignmouth and the many very wonderful combes between Teignmouth and Torquay. My recollection is that the cliffs south of the Dart are less red in colour, though memory may here be at fault. I seem to have noticed a browner shade, with more of shale and stone and sand, in the cliffs towards Start Point. If this be so, I may be forgiven for suggesting that the wonderful cliffs to east and west of the Exe are the natural offspring of Woodbury Common and Haldon respectively. These two great natural ridges of heather- and ling-covered upland run almost north and south on each side of the river, converging a little towards its mouth, as a glance at any map with coloured contours will show. The River Otter cuts Woodbury neatly in half lengthways, but the ridge which runs from Honiton, behind Ottery St. Mary to Peak Hill, is as much a part of Woodbury as if the Otter had never flowed and overflowed, to make the rich alluvial valley in which lie Ottery St. Mary, Venn Ottery, Newton Poppleford, Colaton Raleigh and Otterton.

Of these two great ridges I have written elsewhere in this book. They look insignificant on your coloured map beside

the great brown masses of Dartmoor and Exmoor, but they have a real and peculiar charm of their own. I like to think that they are different in their very composition, that they, chiefest of all the hills and ridges of Devon, are builded of the rich red earth which is Devon's glory.

I do not wish to break lances with geologists or rashly to make assertions which any Saturday afternoon scientist can tumble about my ears, but I have always thought that, where these two ridges end on the southern seaboard, there the cliffs are more red than anywhere else in Devon. I may be wrong ; my claims to accuracy do not extend to matters of fact.

Unless you venture along the cliff edge, there is only one way of leaving Ladram westwards, and that will lead you through Otterton.

To appreciate the name, Otterton, you must hear it on Devon lips. The broadening of the vowels, the backward roll of the R, and the soft slurring of the explosive dental consonants make of this bristle of T's one of the really beautiful names of Devon. But to appreciate the beauty of Otterton itself you have only to go there.

If I were asked to choose out the half-dozen most beautiful villages in Devon—which heaven forbid !—Otterton would be one of the first. Appledore and Newton St. Cyres, Gittisham and Croyde, Topsham (because of its strand), Lynmouth, Clovelly, Drewsteignton, Widecombe-in-the-Moor, Berry Pomeroy—all these would have to find a place in my half-dozen, no easy matter for an indifferent mathematician,

but Otterton would certainly stand very near to the head of my list.

There is not much of it. A single street, along which runs a stream, bridged here and there before the thatched and colour-washed cottages, and a wonderful grove of chestnuts

UNDER THE CHESTNUTS, OTTERTON

about its little village green, and you have the whole of Otterton. Wherein does its unique charm lie? It is difficult to say. In Topsham you can point to the beautiful old strand of Dutch houses fronting the estuary, Appledore has its quay and its cobbled streets leading out towards the Burrows,

Newton St. Cyres its beautiful unbroken line of dazzlingly white thatched cottages, Widecombe its perfect tower, rising as straight as a spear and as simple as faith in the cup of Dartmoor Hills, but Otterton is just, I suppose, Otterton. It has its chestnuts, a glory of great white candles when the flowers are in bloom, and it has that little stream running its entire length without which no village is really complete, but it is not these things which really constitute its peculiar attractiveness. It may be that this attraction exists for me alone, but I do not think so. There is something about the irregular street, with its cottages of varied colours, some a pale pink, some yellowish, some the native colour of Devon earth, and some of a dazzling whiteness, which is hard to resist. If you paint, resistance is impossible. The faintly coloured walls and the low, green doors seen beneath the heavy foliage of the chestnuts, and the vivid splashes of sunlight beyond the cool dark shadows which the chestnuts throw, is as perfect a picture of village harmonies as one could wish.

Whether harmony other than that of tone and colour prevails in Otterton I do not know. I have no acquaintance in the village—I do not think my friendly gamekeeper of Peak Hill lives there—but it would seem almost impossible that men could live at variance with one another here. And yet I dare say they do.

There ought to be legends about Otterton. With Ladram Bay and half a dozen other coves almost at its doors, its very stones ought to be able to tell old tales of smugglers and forbidden cargoes, of kegs of French spirits left upon doorsteps

when the moon was hidden, and of the passing through the village at midnight of strings of pack-mules at which no man looked. In this Otterton is disappointing. As a village it is neither entirely of the sea nor of the land; it is poised betwixt the two. If you are after horse pistols and flint-locks, shaded lights and muffled rowlocks, you will do better at Beer or Branscombe, but if your wish is to dream away a contemplative hour in one of the pleasantest of villages, with the soft Devon speech all about you, then Otterton will serve better than most.

I lack method. I have set out to travel in memory the seaboard of Devon, and not only am I arrived at Otterton, which is not on the coast at all, but I find myself, with a map in front of me, sorely tempted to take that half-inch step to Hayes Barton, the birthplace of Sir Walter Raleigh. And there is excuse for it. In this fireside pilgrimage, in which I gather together the odds and ends of a hundred days of wandering and scrambling along this coast, I am sworn to write, or at any rate to write at length, only of those places which do not daily resound with the deep rumble of the all-conquering char-à-banc. Unknown Devon is my theme, and it is to our shame, as Englishmen and co-inheritors of that Empire which Raleigh was the first man clearly to see, that Hayes Barton may very aptly be so described. Perhaps it is our way. If you go to Stratford-on-Avon it is not the English of these islands which you will hear spoken before Shakespeare's tomb; here, too, is that same clipped, nasal and withal racy tongue. It would have sounded strange to

Raleigh's ears ; and yet, if it had not been for him, it might well never have been spoken.

We English do not affect very much the form of tribute which consists in pilgrimage to the birthplaces of our great men ; we leave this to the more sentimental American, the more conscientious Teuton, or the more imaginatively excitable Latin. In such places we are too self-conscious, a little afraid, perhaps, that we should seem overmuch to pride ourselves upon our race, and upon the part which these men of our blood have played in the shaping of the world. After all, what is there to do but to come, to see, and to depart ? we ask, and we do this with a sort of shy, almost apologetic embarrassment.

The beautiful old gabled house where Raleigh spent his boyhood is a part of England's history. It is a very beautiful old house, and it is easy to believe that, in later years, Raleigh could offer " most willingly to give you whatsoever in your conscience you shall deem it to be worth " for the repurchase of it.

Between here, Budleigh Salterton and the neighbouring ports of Exmouth and Topsham, Raleigh spent his boyhood, growing in his love for the sea and for the great new things which it had to offer to the adventurer. If there is any spot in which the casual dreamer may catch an echo of that great spirit, it is here in these forgotten lanes, here by these sleepy quays. But there is danger in it. It is easy to sentimentalize into being a Raleigh who never existed—perhaps Millais did it in the picture which he painted close by at Budleigh

Salterton—it is as easy and probably quite as accurate, as to pace the banks of the Avon at Stratford, with deer-stealing Will Shakespeare in doublet and hose before your mind's eye. These are unprofitable labours.

Hayes Barton must wait for revisiting. My tale is of the seaboard, and though there is perhaps no house in the length and breadth of this land which the accident of birth has so linked up with the things of the sea I must leave it, for the sea itself. It will not change. In the three centuries and more since Raleigh's birth it has probably not changed at all.

From Budleigh Salterton to Exmouth there runs a path which I shall always remember, both on account of its own great beauty and of the companions with whom I have trodden it. It is not grand coast scenery, like the crags and cliffs of the North Devon coast, nor does it rise to the great heights above the sea of the cliffs which Exmoor throws out to meet the waters of the Bristol Channel. Nowhere, I think, does this path rise to more than four hundred feet, and for most of its length it is not very high above the white shingled beaches, but it leads through a very pleasant country of pasture and copse, of little combes and streams, and it brings you at last to the top of Orcombe Point, with the long sweep of the Exmouth sands and promenade below you. This is the end of Exmouth which merges almost imperceptibly into little rocky coves and the long stretch of sand to Straight Point, altogether the pleasanter end of the little town.

Budleigh Salterton, out of which this path climbs westwards, is of all the professedly seaside resorts between Lyme

Regis and Exmouth the one which I like best; it does not run to piers and promenades, and it is flanked by very beautiful cliffs of the authentic red Devon earth. Here again it is the eastward end of the town, or rather half a mile beyond the last house, which is the most attractive. The estuary of the Otter is really a miniature replica of the estuary of the Exe; the bar of shingle which almost crosses its mouth corresponds exactly to Dawlish Warren, and the tiny stream, across which an active man can jump, is the counterpart of the channel which leads out to sea between Exmouth and the Pole Sands. This little estuary is not sandy at its mouth like its greater sister a mile or two westwards, but it is a great place to sit and watch the tide run.

We will jump the estuary of the Exe, swim the channel if you will; it has been often enough done, in spite of the current. Indeed, I once nearly swam it myself, but, like so many channel swimmers, I was forced to give in. Unfortunately, I had not arranged for a boat with a jazz band and beef-tea to accompany me, and if a better swimmer than I had not been at my elbow this book would never have been written. The mouth of the estuary is no place for the semi-amphibious.

A longshoreman will put you across on Dawlish Warren and a couple of miles along soft sand will bring you to the farther mainland. I have often tramped that two miles, and the yielding desert does not make harder going. I always think that a system of camel transport ought to be instituted along the Warren, it is so obviously the place for camels; their

EAST BUDLEIGH

silhouetted forms, moving statelily along the ridge of the sand hillocks, would give a piquantly Oriental look to the scene. But camels are an uncertain speculation in Devon ; the most we can hope for, I am afraid, is donkeys.

From Dawlish Warren to Start Point, where the coast of Devon turns westward, is some twenty-five miles as the crow flies. Half of it, as far south as Paignton, is probably as well known as any piece of coast of the same length along our shores, but from Brixham southwards it is a different story. Here are deserted stretches of sand and shingle, little bays where the trees grow to the water's edge, and steep, rutted roads which drop precipitously towards the sea ; tucked away under the shelter of high cliffs are little fishing villages where the male inhabitants really fish, and the blue waters of Start Bay are dotted with their brown sails. From Dawlish to Paignton the coast is given over to the visitors who all the year round travel hopefully westwards and southwards in search of sea and sunshine, but from Brixham the seaboard belongs still to Devon. Here still the little boats set out day after day as they did in the time of Drake, and the life of the little villages, which the visitor is only just beginning to touch, continues placidly its age-long course. If the fisherman's catch now travels on a fast train to the London markets instead of feeding his family, it makes no difference to his method of obtaining it.

All this is not to say that the coast from the Exe to Torquay is not very beautiful ; it is. There are fine beaches and beautifully wooded combes within half an hour's walk of

Torquay. The caves and rocks just south of the Teign, known as Labrador, Blackallers Cove, Maidencombe, Whitsand Beach and Watcombe, are all that one could wish, but they are not unknown. Not that they are really overcrowded; the greater part of those who go to Torquay find sufficient occupation within the town itself; it is only the fringe of the crowd which scatters along the coast. But I feel that, of all Devon, this stretch of coast has least claim to inclusion in this book.

My first sight of Brixham was from the deck of the ketch "Elizabeth"—I think that was her name—sailing out of Topsham on a fine windy day in May. It is a complicated story and really begins in the bar of a tavern down on the quay at Topsham, a favourite resort of large, red-faced, bearded men in blue jerseys, who sail coastal schooners and yawls and ketches and barges from Topsham to the ends of the earth within reason. Some of them go as far as the northern ports of Brittany.

It was a pleasantly mellowed skipper-owner whom Russell and I found when we passed under the low oak-beamed doorway after a day spent navigating the mud flats of the estuary in a sailing dinghy, and in the richest of Devon speech, a language almost incomprehensible to the outsider, he was holding forth on the subject of the sailing qualities of the ketch "Elizabeth." Some one of those present had, apparently, seen fit to question her handiness in a sea; I could only admire his temerity, for the skipper was a Devon giant of about six feet four and vast of girth. Personally I

BRIXHAM TRAWLERS READY FOR SEA

should have agreed with him if he had asserted that she could fly.

Our entrance did not interrupt the argument, but it brought a new and impartial element into the discussion; and, before we were aware, we found ourselves committed to an early start the following morning, aboard the "Elizabeth," bound to Brixham for the cargo of gravel. There was still, I reflected as later we made our way along the village street under a fitful and gusty moon, romance in the world.

The romance was less apparent next morning. The "Elizabeth" was to go down the river with the ebb at about 5.30, and a cold, grey dawn had barely broken when two rather reluctant and shivering adventurers climbed aboard her. Fortunately the skipper had not forgotten his press-gang activities of the evening before and we were not treated as stowaways; instead, we were conducted to the cabin and given plates of nondescript but undoubted fish, and mugs of tea, which, from its taste, was intended as corroborative evidence of the nature of the more solid portion of the repast. But at 5.30, in the cabin of a ketch, these things taste differently; in any case there was no room to be fastidious.

I know something about petrol engines, but that aboard the "Elizabeth" was the first one of my aquaintance which was expected to work up to its waist in sea water. Obviously it was not a normal engine. At the very moment when the prospect of an early departure seemed to be most remote, it burst suddenly into spluttering life, and the two hands,

instead of betraying incredulous astonishment not untinged with awe, turned without a word to the mooring ropes. The cruise of the " Elizabeth " had begun.

I have sailed the estuary of the Exe in many and various craft, from a trim motor launch to a pig-headed houseboat, but I had never before dared its caprices in the early hours of a May morning. Haldon was hidden and the sparse trees on the low-lying flats which extend to Turf were dim shadows in the morning mists. As we moved majestically along to the throbbing and spluttering of our engine, we seemed to be afloat on a great waste of pearl-grey waters, stretching out towards the dim horizon beyond which was the Exmouth channel and the sea. A boom swung suddenly out of the mist and slipped astern as we turned, following the channel towards Turf.

Just so, I thought, must this river have looked as other little boats, some of them no larger than the " Elizabeth," slipped silently out to sea, with many weeks of Atlantic buffetings between them and the new colony of Virginia ; on such a morning, perhaps, some of those same little boats set forth from Topsham to join with Drake and Effingham off Plymouth Sound, all uncertain of the issue of the meeting which was before them. On either hand the beautiful land of Devon, with its kindly, soft-voiced people, lay sleeping in the mist, and eastwards, where the high ridge of Woodbury was hidden, a single gleam showed where the sun was soon to break through. It was a setting forth which linked the centuries.

At this point my reverie was cut short by the swinging across of the mainsail boom. Something had to be cut short either my reverie or my career; I preferred that it should be the former.

The mists lifted as we went out with the tide and the current in our favour, between Exmouth and the Pole Sands, and gradually the whole estuary lay revealed astern, as far north as Pennsylvania Hill; if it had not been for an ever-present anxiety about the main boom, I should have tried conscientiously to recapture something of the sensations of the gentleman adventurers who from this channel had so often looked their last at their homeland. True, I was bound only for Brixham, on the other side of the headland just beginning to show away over the starboard bow, but it would have needed but little imagination to lengthen the voyage to the Indies. The business of hoisting our big brown mainsail, a job for all hands, unfortunately intervened, and when I again had leisure for soliloquy Dawlish Warren and the estuary had dropped far astern, and the skipper was inviting me to a further issue of tea in the cabin. Away to port stretched the long line of headlands, visible on a clear day, as far as Portland Bill, for it is necessary to stand well out to sea to avoid the sandy shallows which the Exe has silted up, before making towards Brixham.

The cabin of a ketch has nothing in common with its enamelled and gilded equivalent aboard a yacht; it is, I should imagine, about the smallest and most comfortless place in which three or four men could possibly live. All

the time it smells of bilge and paraffin, with a sort of under-smell of tar and oilskins, eked out by fish. There is no more than just room to move, and there are innumerable sharp edges in wait for the shins of the unwary. Fortunately there was no more than a rolling swell on the sea ; in anything like heavy weather it would have been impossible.

But this is an account, however incoherent, of the coasts of Devon, not a sea story. I may not, even if I could, diversify it with stirring adventures. There was no mutiny and no one was put in irons ; the most dangerous thing about the cruise was the skipper's cooking. But we faced it like men, and the early evening—for it is a matter for long and tedious tacking when the wind is sou'westerly—brought us off Brixham.

The sun was already behind Dartmoor, and the little town piled up the hillside, with its quay and cluster of masts below, was silhouetted against the evening sky. Every one ought to see Brixham for the first time from the sea, with the last light of the fading sky behind it. All the squalor and untidiness of a working fishing village is hidden by the kindly shadows, and there remains all the romance of a little community which lives by the sea. For a brief half-hour or less, as the light faded, Brixham touched beauty.

If you like Appledore, you will like Brixham, despite the extra efficiency and the added bustle due to the fact that it is the head-quarters of the trawling fleet. Sturdy, squat little vessels, these, battered and weathered by a hundred gales, but they represent the hope of Brixham, for this is an

honest fishing village; no one will offer to take you round the bay for a shilling. Not that they will admit that trawling pays—far from it. An old skipper with whom our own giant made us acquainted told us of the many added difficulties which now face the trawling fleet, not the least amongst them

BRIXHAM

being the post-war legacy of wrecks which lie thick on the ocean bed between Start Point and Portland Bill. This is a veritable graveyard of ships, for enemy submarines were busy here during the war; it is a significant part of England's unseen devastated area.

These hidden wrecks, many of them but little below the surface, are a matter of great concern and loss to the trawlers. Every year they lose nets to the value of thousands of pounds because of them.

Brixham is first and foremost a fishing village. Its

THE BOAT-BUILDER'S, BRIXHAM

fleet of trawlers is one of the most famous in the country, though of late years, so the fishermen tell me, the fish seem to have deserted the Brixham waters. It is only natural that the little town should be eloquent of its industry. As you stand on the old stone quay, with the tangle of masts before

you, and, beyond and above them, the coloured houses of the fishermen climbing to the hilltop, it becomes evident that fishing at Brixham is not the camouflage industry which it often is at more popular holiday resorts ; and, if the sight of Brixham does not convince you, then the smell will.

Not that I object to that. Personally, I like fishing villages to smell of fish—it is a sort of guarantee of respectability ; when they smell of motor chars-à-bancs I become suspicious.

Properly to know and to appreciate this little town where William of Orange first landed in England, you need to forget that you do not live in it. It is not sufficient to photograph the quay and to stand on the very stone where that august but dull prince first set his foot ; you must take up your abode in the little inn where Russell lives on nothing a day when he is painting trawlers, and dip your spoon into the common pot. Rough ? Of course it is rough, trawling is a rough game, and you cannot come to any knowledge of a town that lives by it through the plate-glass windows of an hotel. But at Brixham there are no large plate-glass hotels.

You must not go to Brixham unless you like fish and fishermen, but if these are to your taste, then the quayside inns, where they cook the former to perfection and where the latter are to be found practically undiluted, will, as the guide book says, well repay a visit. Here you may get salt tack and salt talk, brawn and brine, and the strange familiar converse of the deep-sea fishermen. It is a new and different world, and if once you can become free of it Brixham will be hard to leave.

William of Orange was not the first famous personage to land at Brixham, though why *he* landed there I never could understand. Monmouth's landing at Lyme Regis has always been to me another mystery. I can appreciate the attraction of the West Country for kings who find themselves without thrones, and more than one has found an asylum there, but why a would-be king *looking* for a throne should commence his search in a small and, in those days, particularly inaccessible fishing village, is beyond my comprehension. However, Brixham proved a better jumping off place than Lyme Regis, and William a more successful adventurer than Monmouth. I have heard Brixham men swear to some pretty tall stories to the honour and glory of their town, but I have never yet heard one maintain that if Monmouth had had the good sense to land at Brixham he would have been King of England, though I have not the slightest doubt that if the matter were put to the vote in Brixham, there would be an overwhelming majority in its favour. It is a patriotic little town, and its scorn of Torquay is mixed with a sort of kindly pity ; William of Orange never even heard of the place.

Vespasian and Titus, who are said to have entrenched themselves on the top of Berry Head, were other celebrated visitors to Brixham, but the archæological fervour with which I discovered their fort one afternoon faded away when I found that my Roman ruins were the remains of a fort built during the Napoleonic wars. However, I am not particular to a century or two where ruins are concerned, and I remember with gratitude the ripe fruit of the blackberry brambles with

which they were overgrown. The scratches have disappeared, but the taste of the blackberries remains.

From Brixham to Start Point is a coast at once beautiful, infinitely varied, and very largely unknown; I can claim it with an easy conscience. It is less easy to write of it, for it is not a particularly accessible stretch of coast, except south of the Dart between Stoke Fleming, a quaint and rather charming village, and Slapton Sands; and, on the various occasions when I have made my way down to it I have never been very certain where I was. There is a fine cliff scramble from Brixham along to Kingswear, but I defy anyone to identify the coves and combes which break that natural sea wall. Mudstone Sands I know, its name attracted me from the first, and Scabbacombe Sands also, for much the same reason; but, for the rest, I am content that they should be as they are, places of grateful, if anonymous, shade and rest.

The estuary of the Dart comes upon the walker as a sudden surprise; Kingswear is hidden, but across the entrance the old castle and church stand bravely at the water's edge. There is no nonsense of sand or mud about this estuary, it is a deep-water channel from cliff to cliff, with room inside to shelter a navy. More than once it has done so; during the Napoleonic wars the wooden bulwarks of Britain were occasionally glad to find themselves within the safe lair of the Dart.

This broad, winding estuary, with its two picturesque old towns of Dartmouth and Totnes, one at either end, is one of the most beautiful in Devon; indeed, the skippers

of the river craft which ply between Dartmouth and Totnes will roundly assert that it is the most beautiful in the world. Perhaps it amounts to the same thing.

But once more we will jump an estuary and take our way along the seaboard southwards, round the great stretch of Start Bay to Start Point. Up from Dartmouth the road climbs, and then drops again through Stoke Fleming to Blackpool.

Blackpool! What do you expect, Lancashire readers of this book? Assuredly not that which you will find here. I do not know how this bay came by its name, whether it was the sport of chance or the ironic humour of some stray wanderer from Lancashire; but if you have a taste for contrasts it would be the experience of a lifetime to charter a fast aeroplane and fly from one Blackpool to the other.

Blackpool! Picture a road, scarcely free of the jolly cottages on the outskirts of Stoke Fleming, running by a fringe of trees, with, beyond them, a gleam of sand and purple sea; make your way through the gate on to the beach and you will find a beautiful little bay, rimmed with the woods which cover the headlands at either end. The trees are green, the beach is white and gold, and for some reason the sea is a vivid purple. I have never seen it any other colour here; an ordinary translucent blue or green may be well enough for Torquay or Ilfracombe, the red of the washed Devon earth in the water pleases the holiday-maker at Budleigh or Sidmouth, but only royal purple is good enough for this Blackpool in Devon. Cross the shingle and sand to the water's edge;

it is crystal clear. And best of all, in a mad, gregarious world, you will have it all to yourself ; at most a stray picnic party will look up, as startled as Robinson Crusoe before the footprint of Man Friday. That is Blackpool. Shades of Arkwright, can such things be ?

The southern extremity of Blackpool Bay is known as Matthew Point, and immediately round it is a little bathing cove where the water is clear and fresh, and the fine shingle beach almost, but not quite, sand. Nowhere else on the Devon coasts, north or south, have I ever had a bathe quite like the swim which I had there one day in a remembered August. A boatload of cadets from the Dartmouth Naval College came and joined me, a joyous splashing company of naked, sun-browned bodies ; I do not know which of us was the more surprised to find that the cove had been discovered by someone else. Then they hoisted the sail of their regulation cutter and sailed away north-east, leaving me like a piece of jetsam, to lie through the long golden Devon afternoon, just above high-water mark. I dressed with reluctance.

I have never seen anything quite like Slapton Sands. I ran down to it one day through Slapton, and suddenly I found myself on a long, straight causeway, with a wide fresh-water lake on my right, and the breakers of Start Bay on my left. It is an extraordinary place, not perhaps very beautiful, though the hillside beyond Slapton Ley, as the lake is called, is green with orchards.

Then I lost myself. On every occasion when I have made my way to this out-of-the-way corner of Devon I have lost

myself. The lanes are of the true Devon character, deep trenches in the red earth, smothered in wild flowers and often roofed with wind-blown trees, and it is impossible, for miles together, to obtain any sort of observation over the surrounding country. After a few minutes in such a maze all sense of direction is surely gone as if the wanderer were at the bottom of the sea ; orientation is a lost science, north and south have ceased to exist. Then suddenly round a blind corner you come into a high road, and find that you have not the slightest idea which way to turn. Every village looks familiar, in none can you say with certainty, " I have been here before." Compared with a real tangle of typical Devon lanes, the old Hampton Court Maze would not have bewildered a blind kitten. So it is no wonder that I look in my sketch book or turn over my snapshots, and find a series of anonymous pictures, the originals of which I could only hope to find again by chance, and the names of which I never knew.

In this jumble of nameless pictures, Beesands stands out. For one thing, there was less opportunity for mistake here, because Beesands is on the sea, where everything is simple and straightforward, and for another, it was here that I took part in a great catch of sea salmon.

I had eaten my frugal lunch, sitting upon the shingle and watching the smooth rise and fall of the wide sheet of water before me, when a succession of black objects, appearing and disappearing, some hundred yards or so from the land, caught my attention. Porpoises. I stood up and got out my glasses to see better, and then I noticed that the little row

of cottages under the cliff, away on my right, had suddenly become peopled with excited men and women. With shouts of eager encouragement a boat was launched, and a great drag net, with floats and sinkers, was thrown in a wide arc, each end of which came to the shore.

Then was a great hauling, for the most part in silence,

BEESANDS

for a drag net is no light matter. Men, women, children and I tailed on to the ropes, wet and slippery with sea-weed. Yard after yard, fathom after fathom of the net came empty ashore as the arc narrowed and the toilers at the two ends drew closer together, and I was beginning to think that the casting of the net had been an error of judgment, or at best a piece of misguided enthusiasm. I was wrong.

The semicircle of net still remaining in the water narrowed to a bare ten yards, and suddenly a great splashing arose within it. Instantly a dozen men dashed waist deep into the water and seizing the net on the seaward side, carried it with its struggling contents, high up on the beach ; men, women, and children flung themselves upon the gasping and leaping fish. Soon all was over, and the women, their aprons held out in both hands, were gathering the catch, a single fish being often as much as one woman could carry.

Half an hour after I had seen the tell-tale porpoises, the beach was deserted again, save for a screaming cloud of sea-gulls fighting for the smaller fish which the fishermen had discarded.

From Start Point the coast turns again westward, and, after rounding the two great headlands of Prawle Point and Bolt Head, makes north-west for Plymouth and the Cornish border.

This is the serenest coast of all Devon, by which I do not mean to say that it lacks rocks as savage as those which front the Atlantic, or coves as reminiscent of the stirring past as any, but it is here that the spring first comes to Devon, and it is surely here that the summer gives way most reluctantly to autumn. There is here no winter as the dweller in the north counts winter ; a cooler mildness in the air is all the difference, and I have bathed here, if not on Christmas Day, at least as near to it as makes no matter. Not that this coast does not have its winter storms ; the English Channel, can work itself into a very creditable rage on

occasion, even though it may not be able quite to afford the adventurer in sensations a spectacle like that of an Atlantic gale beating itself out against Tintagel Head. In Bigbury Bay is Thurlestone Rock, sufficient evidence of many centuries of great storms, its name due to the way in which it has been " thurled " by the action of the water, and anyone who has visited the little inn on Borough Island, opposite Bigbury, during a south-westerly gale, will have a very vivid remembrance of great white rollers, miles in length, sweeping landwards under the impelling influence of a wind against which it is impossible to stand.

But the southernmost coast of Devon is not always or even often like this, and these furious interludes only serve to make the winter sun shine the brighter. It may be that some parts of the south Cornish coast, notably Falmouth, or the Scilly Islands, winter more easily than they do here, but it is a debatable point.

This is, moreover, a very and indeed a surprisingly unexploited corner of Devon ; only one extension of the main line comes anywhere near it, that which follows the course of the Avon to Kingsbridge, though in these days of quick road transport this means less than it did thirty years ago. I would say that the piece of country lying between Totnes, Dartmouth, Start Point, Salcombe and Ivybridge, roughly a square, is as little spoiled as any I know.

Between Start Point itself and Kingsbridge it is so unspoiled as to be almost impassable. In this particular corner although I have often visited it, I never can be quite sure

where I am, and I am always being surprised by the sudden view of Start Bay lying below me, where I expected to see the Salcombe Creek. This sounds almost inexcusable; a traveller who does not know the points of the compass, wherever he is, should stay, you may say, at home, but the lanes of this most pleasantly wooded and most ancient corner of Devon, have worn themselves in the course of time deep into the earth, and they twist and turn so bewilderingly that as well you might ask a spinning top to point to the sun as the traveller who is committed to them. If you are tied to a car there is nothing for it but to go on and hope for the best; turning is impossible in a lane which decks both your running boards with a harvest of blackberries as you go; but if you are afoot there will come a moment when maddening uncertainty will send you scrambling up the steep side of the lane, through the tangle of briers and wild flowers, for the sight of something by which to ascertain your true whereabouts. Once over the top, you will hesitate to descend again into the drowsy, sweet-scented uncertainty of the lane; no one will turn you from the fields or woods if you prefer to cut across country.

But, indeed, it matters very little whether you move according to plan, or let the winding, branching by-roads take you where they will, unless you have a fixed goal and a definite appointment, as foolish handicaps in this pleasant countryside as they are in the great pilgrimage of life. Wherever your feet take you, you will find there a beautiful place and a very great content; you will find a kindly welcome and

cheer which the great cities of the earth cannot emulate. This is the true countryside for the philosophically minded traveller, who is content still to travel, rather than to arrive ; because he is a traveller, he will resist the temptation of one beautiful place after another ; because he is a philosopher he will know that however beautiful the place, however perfect its kindly hospitality, it will be more beautiful in tranquil recollection. There are too few such travellers nowadays.

I like best to walk here ; a car is a hindrance to thought, if you wish to think, and a disturbance of blank tranquillity, if you wish to be blankly tranquil ; I prefer to register my progress in terms of jolly thoughts to the mile, rather than in miles to the gallon. And, walking, I like to walk over the field-paths, if I can find them, or over the fields, if I cannot, to Portlemouth—East Portlemouth is its complete name, though I have never found its western counterpart—calling at the coast-guard station on Prawle Point on the way. I pooled luncheons once with the coast-guard here ; his was better than mine, and in addition he let me look through his telescope nearly the whole afternoon. I am vastly in his debt.

I find it almost impossible to tear myself away from a telescope, and sometimes in my calmer moments, I try to discover why this should be. I can sit on a quay and look at a schooner and think of nothing at all with any man on earth, but at the end of an hour or so I want to get up and go somewhere else and look at another schooner. Yet I can

spend all the hours of daylight watching, through a telescope, a little boat beating its way up and down the horizon. I suppose it is just human perverseness.

I do not know whether legend connects the cliffs between Prawle Point and the mouth of the creek with those over which the possessed swine ran down to the sea, but there is certainly a porkish flavour about them. Gammon Head and Pig's Nose are close together beyond Black Cove; if there does not exist a legend, someone ought to supply one. It is a fine piece of coast, rocky, with here and there little sandy beaches; it could easily stand a legend or two.

As you drop down the road from Portlemouth to the ferry, the whole, or at any rate a very large part of the Salcombe Creek lies below you. Something has gone wrong here. This was so obviously meant to be the estuary of the Avon, only the ridge upon which Churchstow stands got in the way, and the river had to find another outlet to the sea. It is a pity; this would have made a very beautiful estuary, and it is not until you sail up the real estuary of the Avon that you cease to regret it.

Portlemouth itself is an interesting place. It was here that the Parliamentary forces were entrenched during the long siege of Salcombe Castle, the last fortress in Devon to be held for the king, and the remains of their earthwork may still be traced by the curious. It is difficult now to imagine war in this quiet and peaceful spot, and, indeed, war as we know it has never visited it; the warfare of Puritan and Cavalier, however fierce and embittered it may have

been in other parts of England, was in the West, for the most part, conducted in a very gentlemanly manner. All the same, the Parliamentary batteries must have made a brave noise and a great smoke as they hammered their red-hot balls against the defences of Salcombe ; if there were as many waterfowl in Frogmore Creek then as there are now, they must have wondered what was happening.

Portlemouth, with its cruciform church dedicated to a Celtic saint, is really best seen from the other side of the ferry ; from there the steep hillside, at the top of which it stands, makes a fine background to the flowing waters of the creek.

Salcombe is a pleasant little place, with a quaint irregular main street, and with an unrivalled situation amongst pleasantly rounded and wooded hills ; the little harbour is alive with the scudding sails of tiny craft, and altogether it would be difficult in Devon to find a pleasanter retreat. Its climate is in its favour, and, if it lacks something of the charm of the little decayed ports of the north, it makes up for it in a generous abundance of sunny hours. *Horas non numero nisi serenas* might well be the motto of Salcombe ; it would have a great tale of them.

The mouth of the creek is in marked contrast to the pleasantly rounded hills and the peaceful waters of the upper reaches. Here Devon approximates again to the ferocity of Cornwall, and Bolt Head, with the fatal Mew Stone lying off it, is the beginning of an iron-bound coast which stretches round beyond Bolt Tail and the Thurlestone Rock to Bigbury. It is for the most part almost impossible to get

down to the shore, but there are many other views over the coasts of England which I would exchange for that from the end of Bolt Tail, and the whole of the cliff walk from Bolt Head to Bolt Tail is magnificent.

I am not very interested in the little villa-bungalow town of Bigbury-on-Sea. I prefer to turn here northward and follow the Avon up to Aveton Gifford, a quaint and sleepy little village, and thence through Woodleigh up to the high ground round Moreleigh and Halwell.

From Bigbury to Plymouth Sound lies the stretch of coast which I know least well of all the Devon seaboard, though I like Wembury Bay, and I once sailed a small boat a little way up the Yealm estuary. Then I stuck in the mud, and was so thankful to get out again with the next tide that I never adventured farther. I do not really much regret this stretch of coast; it is, I fancy, the playground of Plymouth, and, although some day I shall explore it, I have no intention of writing about it until that time comes.

II

CONCERNING ESTUARIES

II

CONCERNING ESTUARIES

THERE is great beauty and much fascination in a tidal estuary, and Devon is rich in these. Five large estuaries give character and interest to its coasts, in the north the double estuary of the Taw and the Torridge, and in the south the estuaries of the Exe, the Teign, the Dart, the Tavy and the Tamar, the two last emptying into the noble basin of Plymouth Sound. In addition, there are the lesser, but no less beautiful, estuaries of the Erme and the Yealm, and the half estuary, half creek at Salcombe. From all of these lead innumerable reaches and backwaters, little subsidiary creeks and waterways, more than any man could hope to explore even in the longest of summers. If Devon had no other natural beauty, its estuaries would give it place amongst the first counties in England.

No other thing in nature possesses the same unchanging variety or the same capricious charm. A tidal estuary is a thing of a hundred varying moods, each seemingly more beautiful than the last ; in a few minutes it will change from a great peaceful water to the leaden-coloured highway along which a thunderstorm hurries inland, to break against the far blue hills amongst which the river rises. An hour later running waves will set all the masts dancing against

storm-driven clouds, and evening may find it a waste of yellow sand or shining iridescent mud, with here and there a cluster of boats tumbled aslant, this way and that, waiting for the tide to quicken them into living things again.

There are always innumerable little busynesses in progress on a tidal estuary, to entertain the casual wanderer and act as an effective contrast to the eternally unchanging ebb and flow of the tide; man's decorative additions to a great work of nature. The life of the little riverside ports is a thing of unfailing fascination; there is a queer, ordered aimlessness about it. Small boats seem to come and go without obvious purpose; patched, blue-jerseyed fishermen spend long, lazy hours over their tangled nets; a ferry boat fusses to the little quay and away again; a schooner is unloading timber at the wharf, or some dainty pleasure craft is undergoing overhaul. One can sit for hours in serene contemplation of the life of one of these little harbours without the need of any obvious thought at all.

And ordering it all is the ebb and flow of the lazy, certain tide.

All the estuaries of Devon carry shipping to a greater or less extent, from the liners and men-o'-war which call or are stationed at Plymouth, to the little schooners, yawls, ketches and Thames barges which sail up to Topsham or Appledore, Bideford or Barnstaple, or creep at high tide into the sheltered basin at Teignmouth. Of all these I love best the little ports which have long ago lost the importance once attaching to them. Plymouth is too big,

too commercialized. There are doubtless both poetry and romance to be found in the great harbours of England, Bristol, Liverpool, Hull, Plymouth, Portsmouth and the port of London, but the mind cannot take them in. To stand for the first time on Plymouth Hoe, and watch the shipping in the Sound slipping between Mount Batten Point and Drake's Island on its way to Devonport, is a great emotional experience, but I would liefer sit on the quay at Appledore and watch a topsail schooner coming up with the tide, or lend a hand with the ropes as a ketch berths at the Topsham wharf. One cannot help to berth a battleship; my Lords of the Admiralty would consider it an impertinence.

There always seems to me to be something unfriendly about the estuary of the Dart, perhaps because I do not know it well. It is too full of ostentatious pleasure craft, and the efficient, official comings and goings of the boats belonging to the Royal Naval College on the hill. Big ships come into Dartmouth and pass to unknown destinations up the river; it is a deep-water estuary, and I cannot feel the same affection for it as I do for the mud of the Exe or the sands of the Torridge. At Bideford they hold pony races and yacht races over the same course on the same day; that is what an estuary ought to be.

Most of all I love the estuaries of the Exe in South Devon and of the Taw and Torridge in the north. If I knew them better I do not doubt at all that I could come to a similar affection for the estuaries of the Erme and the Yealm, though I could wish that they would dry up more at low water. But

as things are these other two are my favourites; and, of the forgotten ports which they serve, Appledore and Topsham stand first.

The estuary of the Exe lies between Topsham and the sea, which the river enters through a narrow channel, dangerous enough to wreck even the local fishermen now and then, between Dawlish Warren and the little town of Exmouth. At its widest the estuary is almost two miles across, full at high tide, but at low water a great ridged plain of sandy banks, wet mud flats, and narrow, tortuous streams. It is a happy hunting ground alike for the yachtsman, who loves to find out the channels for himself and who enjoys the doubtful pleasures of kedging off, and the painter, who is content to plant his easel on the strips of drying sand and make record of the pictures which Nature offers him with both hands. This is an amusement not without its discomforts and even dangers; Gyrth Russell lives at Topsham, and he has stuck upon more mud banks in the estuary of the Exe than any other painter of the same weight in the British Isles.

On both sides of the estuary itself the country is flat, being marshy and intersected with dykes and ditches between Turf and Exminster, but becoming a well-timbered park further south, where at Powderham Castle the Earl of Devon looks at Lympstone across the estuary. His lordship also looks across the Great Western Railway at the same place, but he probably tries to overlook that. Beyond the green flats the country rises on both sides, to the east to the wonderful heath of Woodbury Common and to the west to

Haldon and the magnificent woods above Starcross, itself one of the most melancholy of villages.

Below Starcross is Dawlish Warren, a sandbar which the river and the sea between them have raised for their mutual hindrance. Such a phenomenon is common to these shallow estuaries; the southern half of Teignmouth is built upon a sandbar, and Braunton Burrows, a wonderful stretch of beach and sandhills across the mouth of the great northern estuary, is another example.

Dawlish Warren is a pleasant place, given over to a bungalow town where summer structures of every conceivable kind are built, and to a golf links, where summer golf of every conceivable kind is played. During the winter months the golf links is often under water, and now and again a bungalow sails cheerfully out to sea or drifts on a high spring tide up the river to Starcross.

I once spent a month marooned upon Dawlish Warren, or, rather, on the little creek which separates the seaward ridge of sandhills from the golf links. My home was a ketch which, having been lost somewhere in the upper reaches of the estuary, had been salved and converted into a houseboat, and a very pleasant home she made. The "Kate," for that was her unromantic name, suffered from none of the disadvantages of the frail bungalows to seaward of her. South-west gales, which bring huge rollers to batter the defences of the southernmost bungalows and occasionally to reduce one of them to matchwood, had no terrors for the "Kate," or her crew. At the worst she would float, though that was a thing she

never did during my tenancy ; the " Kate " was far too staid to indulge lightly in any such prank. For the most part she rested high and dry on a sandbank, but twice a day the tide would creep up the little creek and lap at her black sides. Even then the " Kate " never budged an inch out of the perpendicular ; one has to live upon a ship for a month to realize what a difference a little thing like that can make. Aboard the " Kate " it was possible to enjoy all the sensations of ocean travel without any of its disadvantages.

Dawlish Warren supplies the setting for the opening scene of " WO_2," one of the best adventure novels of the late Maurice Drake, an Exeter glass painter and novelist who died prematurely in 1923. Otherwise it is noteworthy only as the place where I and some of my Topsham friends have been in the habit annually of opening the cockling season. I do not personally care for cockles, but it is good fun to squelch about with bare feet in the soft sands of the Warren looking for them.

Across the channel from Dawlish Warren is Exmouth, a little town with a history, but little present-day charm. That is not to say that it is not a very pleasant seaside resort for those who enjoy such places ; it is. It offers everything that the habitual seaside visitor demands, from pierrots to promenades and steamer trips along the coast. It is said that Exmouth was first popularized as a holiday resort by a Judge on the Western Circuit who visited it and enjoyed the sea bathing ; the Judge was right about the bathing, but he has sentenced the town to an annual invasion of summer

pleasure-seekers who, though no doubt much to the taste of the boarding-house keepers, rather spoil the place during the summer months.

At the Orcombe Point end of the promenade the town

EXMOUTH BIGHT FROM ORCOMBE

fades away into Devon again, and the cliff walk from here to Budleigh Salterton is one of the most delightful I know. This point, too, commands one of the best views of the estuary, and I number in my life few pleasanter hours than those spent sitting in a garden full of roses, high up on the point,

watching the Topsham schooners coming down with the evening tide, and the sun setting behind Haldon Hill.

Exmouth has a history which makes us almost able to forgive its present lapse into prosperity. In the course of many years, certainly more than a thousand, for it was there long before the Danes came and burnt it in 1001, it has helped in the making of English history. Numerous ships were fitted out at Exmouth, and doubtless manned by Exmouth men, for various warlike expeditions under the Plantagenet kings, notably the taking of Calais by Edward III, and it played its part with Topsham and Starcross in the defeat of the Armada. But after being blockaded and taken during the Civil War it seems to have fallen upon evil days until the visit of His Honour the Judge above mentioned. No visible record of Exmouth's heroic past exists in the town itself, which is mostly of late nineteenth-century building. This is a pity; the town has traditions which are worth the preserving, but I imagine that most of the inhabitants are of recent arrival and concerned more with the town's future than its past. Yet some of the old stock remain. The hardy mariner who took me across the bay to Teignmouth and back in an open sailing boat on a wet and windy day was the direct descendant of the pirates of old, though I did not discover the fact until I came to pay his charges.

The best part of the estuary is from Lympstone up past Turf on the farther shore, where the lower end of the Exeter canal joins the river to Topsham. This is true estuary, exactly what an estuary ought to be. Between wooded

shores more than a mile apart, the main stream takes a big bend eastward, and then turns almost due west in a long reach of a mile or more to the Turf Inn ; just past the elbow of the bend a smaller channel leads due north to the Clyst, which joins the Exe immediately below Topsham. From Turf the channel takes another eastward bend, and passes a graveyard of decaying hulks on its way to Topsham, beyond which the estuary ceases, although the river is tidal as far up as Countess Weir.

All the way the channel is marked by weatherbeaten wooden poles and tripods at high water, its course at low water being clearly enough defined by mud banks. It is a fascinating playground.

It was on an August morning that Gyrth Russell and I set sail from Topsham aboard the " Stellundæ," bound for Dawlish Warren.

It would not on the face of it appear to be a very hazardous cruise ; the tide was at the flood and the face of the waters was calm ; latest reports led us to believe that the estuary was comparatively free from pirates. But the true facts of the case put a different complexion upon our voyage, as they probably would upon many others more renowned. The " Stellundæ " was a craft of some twenty tons, flat-bottomed and without any visible means of propulsion ; sails she had none, and her one-time towering masts had been reduced to a stumpy jury mast in the bows, for the " Stellundæ " had been lying for years just inside the canal, used only as a week-end house-boat. But we had decided to sail

her down to the Warren Creek, and with the help of her awning, a red and white striped rectangle with a scalloped edge, we proposed to do so. I do not say that we embarked upon the voyage without misgiving, but we felt that we had got to live up to the great traditions of the sea-dogs of Devon. True, we came from Nova Scotia and Yorkshire respectively, but that was nothing to the matter, we were aboard a Devon boat on Devon waters; Drake and Raleigh were not more jealous of the fair fame of Devon than we at that moment.

We coaxed the "Stellundæ" out of the lock without much difficulty and, once upon the broad face of the waters, proceeded to set sail. We were a little dubious as to the wisdom of utilizing the boathook as our main spar; we felt that we might require it, but we decided that in such an emergency we should probably not need to be under full sail at the same time, so up it went.

There are few sights more beautiful than a well-found craft under full sail on a summer's morning. The "Stellundæ" was not like that. As our red and white striped offence crept up the mast, Topsham stared, unable to believe its eyes. Blue-jerseyed sailors who had looked unmoved upon all the horrors of the seven seas, blanched beneath their tan—and then hurried home to fetch their friends and relations. By the time we drew abreast of Topsham the whole of the maritime population was on the wharf—not one was missing—and a great shout of laughter came faintly out to us across the water. But we cared nothing; we were not out for

personal glory, anyway. Besides, the Roman Horatius, when he stepped out to keep the famous bridge in the brave days of old, was greeted from the ranks of Tuscany in the same way, yet he made a success of the job.

Slowly the crowded wharf of Topsham fell astern on the port quarter, and we faced the long reach to Turf.

The " Stellundæ " was not a fast boat ; about a knot a week seemed to be her normal cruising speed, but we had the now ebbing tide with us, and we piled on the canvas, utterly regardless of the danger of dismasting our stout craft. The captain of the most famous tea-clipper that ever sailed the seas could not have done more ; we piled on all we had ; it was only one awning, anyhow. Slowly, majestically, the " Stellundæ " moved down the river, a faint, *very* faint, wind from the north-east filling her unmentionable sail, and soon we were abreast of the first boom.

" I rather think we turn to the right a little here," said Gyrth.

" Aye, aye, sir," I shouted. Nothing should be lacking to give our cruise the right atmosphere if I could contribute it.

I pushed the helm hard over.

" Look out," called the skipper. " Not so far. I can see mud ! "

" Mud it is, sir," I shouted back remembering that in the best sea stories the helmsman's job seems to be to act as a sort of echo to the captain.

And mud it was. With a sort of sticky lurch the " Stellundæ " ran her bows on to a mud bank and ceased to move.

We discovered that she had ceased to move by watching a tree which was in line with one of the booms, otherwise we

THE "STELLUNDÆ" IN DIFFICULTIES

shouldn't have been certain for some time. However, as we were obviously stuck in the mud, there didn't seem to be any point in going on with the cruise, and we had just decided

that we might as well anchor where we were when a motor boat came along.

It was ignominious, but quicker, and we reached our moorings in the Warren bight in something less than an hour.

We are not the only intrepid mariners who have set out from Topsham to brave the perils of the deep. The story of Robert Lyde, who in 1691 sailed from Topsham in the "Friend's Adventure," and of his later return in the same vessel after a most bloody encounter, practically single-handed, with seven Frenchmen, has often been told. He himself has left an account of it in a work entitled, "A True and Exact Account of the retaking of a ship called the *Friend's Adventure* of Topsham from the French, where one Englishman and a Boy set upon seven Frenchmen, killed two of them, took the other five Prisoners, and brought the Ship and them safe back to England. Performed and Written by Robert Lyde, Mate of the same Ship, 1693." It is a story which loses nothing by being read in Master Robert Lyde's own words; I regret only that it is too lengthy to be included here.

Topsham itself is a quaint and delightful little town, once upon a time a busy and thriving port. It is recorded that at one period of its history Topsham did a great over-sea's trade, notably with Newfoundland, exceeded indeed only by the port of London. But times have changed.

Yet Topsham retains far more of its old-time self than Exmouth or Starcross. The Strand, which runs along the edge of the river, is a one-sided street of Dutch houses, the

like of which I have seen nowhere else in England. Here the Dutch merchants, attracted to this little out-of-the-way spot by its reputation as a trading centre, made their homes, building for their exile a little corner of the Holland they had left. One likes to think of these staid old gentlemen, bringing their strange customs and their outlandish speech

TOPSHAM LOCK

into this quiet Devon town, and moving sedately along this pleasant, sun-splashed street between their brightly tiled homes and their sober counting-houses.

Farther along the Strand, beyond the wharf, stand the long, high buildings, one of them at least now converted into the pleasantest and most hospitable of dwelling-houses,

in which frigates were built for the Navy in the days of wooden ships. Above them on a slight rise, there once stood a fortress of sorts, which was more than once bombarded from the river. The story of these sieges has been lost, but cannon balls are occasionally unearthed in the sloping gardens which lead down to the water's edge.

The church, with its high, red sandstone wall behind the

UNDER THE CHURCH WALL, TOPSHAM

wharf, is not unlike a fortress. Here, at the top of the long flight of steps which leads down to the wharf itself, the time-scarred writer, George Gissing, loved to linger and absorb the wonderful peace of the broad estuary.

Topsham has settled down now to a long sleep, and it is difficult to imagine that anything will ever happen there to awaken it. With its picturesque main street and its fine

old Dutch houses, it will slumber on under the shadow of the old church tower, dreaming of the glories that have departed.

If one leaves Topsham by road for Exmouth, one crosses the head of the little subsidiary estuary of the Clyst by a bridge which leads on to a quarter of a mile or so of road marked by ominous white flood-posts. A south-westerly gale in conjunction with a high spring tide and a heavy rainfall will flood this road to a depth of several feet, as had happened one dark winter's night when I happened to be returning from Exmouth to Exeter. A sudden bow wave which a destroyer might have envied, and swirling water in the light of my head-lamps, indicated to me that it would be unwise to attempt the crossing in a car which was far from amphibious.

From Topsham, schooners and ketches, and sometimes small coasting steamers, go up to Exeter by the canal, one lock of which, used at high water, is opposite Topsham. At one time vessels were able to proceed all the way to Exeter by the river, but the Countess Weir now makes this impossible. Countess Weir itself is a beautiful old many-arched causeway, and is the only way of crossing the Exe by road below Exe Bridge at Exeter.

I leave the estuary of the Exe with regret, but turn with all the pleasures of anticipation to the beautiful northern estuary of the Taw and the Torridge, to Bideford, Barnstaple and Braunton, to Appledore and Westward Ho.

The "silver estuary," as Kingsley calls it, means for me chiefly Appledore. Other of the little estuary ports have their charm ; there is much to be said for Bideford, and

a good deal to be said about Barnstaple, while from Braunton, or at least from the hills on either side of it, the view of the estuary is unrivalled. But, of them all, give me Appledore, on a summer's morning when the tide is running lazily up the double river and seeming to hesitate at the corner which is Appledore, as though uncertain whether to take the way of the Taw or the Torridge. Away across the estuary, four miles at the least as the crow flies, smooth, rounded hills are hazy with the promise of heat to come, and over against the little town, on the southernmost point of the Burrows, the white lighthouse stands like an exclamation point. There is a bustle at the little quay, where once tall ships from Virginia and Newfoundland unloaded tobacco and cod, until the pirates of Lundy and the American War between them killed the trade; fishing boats are being made ready for sea; they will sail when the tide turns, away out over the bar, the thought of which is never far away from the minds of the sailors of Appledore, or of their wives and sweethearts either. Now and again a child falls unconcernedly over the edge of the little wharf into the water, and climbs up one of the many ladders to shake itself before resuming its play.

Appledore is one of the places in which I have decided to spend my declining years; I think they would drift by very slowly and pleasantly there. The spirit of modernity has passed it by, and there is now nothing to disturb its unruffled peace.

I have been looking for Appledore in my library of Devon guide books, but the most I can find is an odd paragraph here

and there. Appledore is "quaint and picturesque," it has "narrow and somewhat fishy cobbled streets." Why not? I like cobbled streets, and if a fishing village may not smell of fish, of what in Heaven's name should it smell? What dull, unimaginative folk these writers of guide books are; give them a monument or a Norman arch or an epitaph,

APPLEDORE QUAY

and they fuss immediately into unproductive effervescence; set them upon the track of a legend or a forgotten battle, and they will wear out shoe leather and the patience of the oldest inhabitant until they have filled their notebooks; but ask them to sit all of a summer's day on a sunbathed quay, with the whole glowing pageant of the wide estuary before

them and the tide for company, and they rust. A fig for their legends and their monuments! If I want legends, I will sit in the sunshine and make them up; if I want monuments, I will betake me to the British Museum; but, if I want the long, serene hours so hard to find in a distracted world, I will go to Appledore.

A very narrow, very unhygienic, very cobbled and entirely delightful street (provided you have not to live in it) leads from the quay to the life-boat station, the most easterly point of the town, and I sat and listened to the tales of the keeper of the life-boat for a whole wet afternoon. They have got a bi-weekly cinema in Appledore, but they don't really need it as long as the life-boat retains its present custodian.

My life-boatman has had an adventurous life, and he misses the daily peril. His chief amusement seems to be to go out in his beloved life-boat and capsize it, himself strapped in his seat, in order to prove to a doubting crew that it will right itself before he is drowned. We all have our hobbies.

But my estuary is becoming disordered; I must be more methodical.

Westward Ho does not seem really to belong to the estuary at all if one looks at the map; it is round the corner to the south; but, if you discount the Pebble Ridge on the one side and Braunton Burrows on the other, then Westward Ho and Saunton are really the two guardians of the estuary, the Scylla and Charybdis of this perilous water. Westward Ho is obviously the place to begin a tour of exploration.

To put it quite frankly, Westward Ho is a fraud. I went there in search of a quaint little fishing village, unchanged since the days of good Queen Bess, and peopled exclusively by the descendants of Amyas Leigh and Salvation Yeo; I found a collection of hotels and villas, unchanged since the days of good Queen Victoria. The truth of the matter is, some enterprising builder, about 1860, conceived the idea of exploiting the popularity of Kingsley's book by making on Northam Burrows a fashionable seaside resort and calling it Westward Ho. Unfortunately he succeeded. It is pleasant to be able to record that Kingsley thoroughly disapproved. "How goes on the Northam Burrows scheme for spoiling that beautiful place with hotels and villas?" he writes.

I dislike Westward Ho as much as any, but I have been guilty of staying there. When Gyrth Russell and I were offered a bungalow at Westward Ho in the summer, the offer was too tempting to refuse.

All my memories of that stay are pleasant ones, though it might have been far otherwise. The early mornings were cold and drear; a great deal of the Atlantic seemed to be beating very unsympathetically upon the pebble ridge within a yard or two of our bungalow, and it brought its own dank mists with it. But little things like that did not deter my companion; painters are hardy folk. His ethical code demanded that we should bathe before breakfast; nothing else would satisfy him, even though I offered to go without breakfast altogether as a way honourably of avoiding bathing before it. But no. If we did not bathe before breakfast,

he insisted, we should not only stand convicted before our own consciences, but be the scorn of all the other bungalow dwellers. This latter was more serious. I was prepared to risk the verdict of my conscience, but no one likes to be a target for the public finger. There was only one thing to be done; I rose early each morning, dipped our costumes into an incredibly cold sea, and hung them out on the railings to dry where every one could see them. They were always the first on the row of railings; all the subsequent bathers looked at them and blushed for their own sluggardly habits. Honour was satisfied.

The Pebble Ridge which runs northward for more than a mile from Westward Ho is interesting. "The surges of the bay," says Kingsley, "have defeated their own fury by rolling up in the course of ages a rampart of gray boulder stones, some two miles long, as cunningly curved, and smoothed, and fitted, as if the work had been done by human hands." But it would seem that quite recently the sea repented of what it had done, for it has broken through the Pebble Ridge and even dared to threaten the Golf Course beyond. On my last visit to Appledore, only a week or two ago, I was tempted to go farther and survey the damage, but at the last moment I found myself reluctant to leave the cosy little town for the bleak inhospitality of Westward Ho.

Kingsley was not altogether right about the origin of the Pebble Ridge. Once or twice a year a group of the inhabitants of the northern district, known locally as Pot-wallopers, spend a day on the Pebble Ridge piling up stones for the

better protection of the grazing land behind it. With the passage of time the custom has become something of a ceremony, but I have never had the privilege of assisting at it.

It was as early one morning as any reasonable person could expect, when I turned my back on Westward Ho and set out with the pious intention of walking all round the estuary to Saunton. This involved really the circumventing of two estuaries, for it would be necessary first to proceed as far as Bideford, in order to cross by the old bridge, returning thence along the other side of the subsidiary estuary of the Torridge as far as Instow, before continuing along the Taw to the bridge at Barnstaple. Saunton is distant from Westward Ho at most some seven miles, but the distance by road round the double estuary is fully twenty-five.

The walk across Northam Burrows to Appledore was exactly in tune with the mood of the morning. Most of the way is fairly smooth going, but now and again it was necessary to scramble across a peaty gully, draining slowly down to the sea. Appledore itself is out of sight as you cross the Burrows, hidden behind a little hill on which a fort once stood, scene of at least one fight during the Civil War, but the whole stretch of marshland up to and beyond the mouth of the estuary is on your left hand. He would be a difficult man who would ask for more.

A short scramble up the slopes of the knoll which shelters the old port from westerly gales, and Appledore and the whole panorama of the estuary lie before you. If you are wise, you

will wait here a long time ; if you are very wise, you will not go any farther until to-morrow.

I could begin talking about Appledore all over again ; it is a place full of fascinations. Last year they were breaking up an old black and white wooden man-o'-war in the river just off the life-boat station, and from here it is possible to see what is left of her. When Russell and I squelched our way out to her across the mud, a couple of years ago or more, her high black and white sides towered high in the air above us, but now there remains little but her stout oaken keel and a rib or two. Soon these too will have gone. She was a beautiful old ship ; I should have liked to have seen her moored permanently off Appledore.

I do not know whether ships of her date were ever built here—she must have been about the time of the Battle of Trafalgar—but I should think it is unlikely. At an earlier date Appledore certainly contributed fighting craft towards the defence of the Realm ; of the five ships which " went over the bar to join Sir F. D. at Plymo," as Philip Wyot, town clerk of Barnstaple wrote in his diary in 1588, I like to attribute one at least to Appledore. Barnstaple and Bideford both claim them, the latter contending that they were ships newly fitted out by Sir Richard Grenville of that town, for the relief of the colonists in Virginia, and commandeered in the emergency. Appledore makes no claim ; but, as you stand here with the little town at your feet, it requires no very serious effort of the imagination to picture the " God Save Her " lying at the quayside, taking aboard powder and shot—

and not too much of either if the historians are to be believed —for that fateful encounter.

But it is three good miles to Bideford, and the tumbled roofs, with the little tangle of masts rising above them, must be left behind. Good-bye, Appledore. I shall come again.

BIDEFORD BRIDGE

The road to Bideford leads past Bloody Corner, the supposed scene of the defeat and death of Hubba the Dane at the hands of a Wessex gentleman of the name of Odda in 878. I do not know whether the legend is true, nor do I think it

matters ; all I can say is that if it is not true it ought to be. Odda and Hubba : such names would justify any legend ; no one outside a nursery rhyme could ever invent them. We will pass Bloody Corner and its legend.

Through Northam, a village for the existence of which it is difficult to account—there seems to be no obvious reason why it should be there at all—the road winds pleasantly until it drops to cross a small stream and then climbs sharply into Bideford.

If Bideford were a continental town there would be pleasant little tables under the trees which stand in a line between the quay and the road, where one would be able to sit and look at the beautiful old bridge, Bideford's chiefest glory, and watch the life of the quay ; anyone who had walked from Westward Ho via Appledore on a hot day would patronize them gladly. Here, too, you would be able to get out your pocket companion and look up all the facts about Sir Richard Grenville and Kingsley.

The name of Sir Richard Grenville means for most people the story of the last epic fight of the " Revenge," but the records of Bideford have much more to tell of the great and gallant gentleman who did so much for the town. Sir Richard Grenville's end was spectacular, and so has caught the imagination of three centuries, but his real life's work was rather that of a conscientious country squire. One does not associate the man who cried :

> " Let us bang those dogs of Seville, the children of the devil,
> For I never turned my back upon Don or devil yet "

with Westminster, yet Sir Richard Grenville was member for a Cornish constituency, as well as being High Sheriff of the county. Had it not been for that last fatal encounter with the galleons of Spain, Sir Richard Grenville would probably have been no more known to fame than a thousand other country gentlemen who devoted their lives to the dull routine of local administration. Kingsley's picture of him in the opening pages of "Westward Ho!" is a wholesome corrective to the more popular one of the swashbuckling captain.

Apart from the Strand and the very beautiful old bridge with its twenty-four irregular pointed arches, Bideford is a little disappointing. It seems to have lost all that Appledore has kept; the fame and prosperity which have come to it since the publication of "Westward Ho!" have submerged it. Those who go to Bideford expecting to find an old Elizabethan town which will illustrate for them the story of Kingsley's book will have to set their imagination to work. Yet "Westward Ho!" is a good companion for a stay in Bideford.

Devon has seen the making of some brave books, and "Westward Ho!" is not one of the least. There is, too, a leisureliness about it which suits well with the spirit in which one should approach this task of sightseeing. We are too apt, in these days, to adopt the methods of our American cousins; the char-à-banc and the megaphone have taken the place of the contemplative stroll and the garrulous countryman. It may be that they are more efficient, but I do not like them as well. Yes, I recommend a re-reading of

" Westward Ho ! " in Bideford ; it will keep you there long enough to see the tide go out more than once.

Kingsley was a great man, even though he holds place as a writer only in the second rank. When he first came to Bideford, his church was empty : the suspicious North Devon character would have nothing to do with the new-comer, but when, with characteristic impetuosity, Kingsley offered to swim or box against any man in the town, opinion changed ; the men of Bideford felt that there must be something in a Christianity so muscular, and Kingsley became the most popular man in the place. He will be remembered as a social reformer and the founder of the Christian Socialist Movement long after his books are forgotten, but in Bideford in Devon he will always be the author of " Westward Ho ! " A fine white statue, bearing the one word " Kingsley," stands at the end of the Strand.

There are many things over which one would like to linger in Bideford. For me the story of John Strange and his fight against the plague which came to the town in 1646 has always been of interest, partly because of its resemblance to the heroic story of Eyam, a little Derbyshire village well known to me, which suffered under a like visitation in 1664. The two stories are strangely similar, even to minor details, though the voluntary isolation which Bideford suffered for three months was extended in the case of Eyam to more than twelve.

I plead guilty to one epitaph before I leave Bideford and strike northward along the eastern bank of the Torridge

for Instow. It is carved on a stone in the graveyard of St. Mary's Church, and reads :

> " Here lies the body of Mary Sexton,
> Who pleased many a man, but never vex'd one,
> Not like the woman who lies under the next stone."

One would like to know who was responsible for the wording of

THE WATCH TOWER, APPLEDORE

that epitaph, and whether Mary Sexton composed it herself. What a lifetime of repression it represents if she did !

An uninteresting road of some three miles along the river bank, but only here and there affording views over the estuary, thanks to the railway, leads past Instow. Just before it turns eastward, it passes a stretch of dunes on the left ; from these Appledore may be seen across the mouth of the river, a picture as perfect as any that Devon has to show.

And so on to Barnstaple, always with the marshy flats and the Taw estuary on the left hand, and Braunton lying snugly between two enfolding hills beyond it. A pleasant

walk, and the bread and cheese and cider at Fremington—or was it Bickington ?—remain in my memory.

With the possible exception of Ilfracombe, a place with little of Devon about it, Barnstaple is the largest town in the northern end of the county. But it is in many ways a disappointing place ; it has become submerged by rows of new houses and only here and there can anything of its old character be traced. The bridge, less fine than that at Bideford, but beautiful for all that, is one of its links with the past, and one can picture the forces of King and Parliament alternately fighting their way across it during the Civil War. Fortunately men were less ruthless in their destruction of property in those days ; if Barnstaple Bridge had ever been in dispute during the Great War, very little of it would have been left as a link either with the past or between the two banks of the river.

Barnstaple changed hands more than once during the Civil War. At first it declared for the Parliament, but an expedition, which met with the Royalist forces near Torrington, was so discouraged by the reception it received, that the town submitted quietly to occupation by a garrison under Prince Maurice. Later, however, the citizens made another attempt to aid the Parliamentary cause, and seizing the town held it for some months until the blockade practically starved them into surrender. Finally the victorious Fairfax, fresh from the successful siege of Exeter, marched north and summoned the town. Its surrender practically ended all opposition to the Parliamentary army in the West.

Nothing remains in Barnstaple to tell of this, or of that other heroic adventure in which Barnstaple men took part, when a little fleet of ships sailed from the three ports to fight against the Armada. But if Barnstaple is something careless of its past, it takes thought for the present. The gardens along the riverside are pleasantly laid out, and the town has a busy, prosperous air. Such monuments as remain, Queen Anne's Walk, with the stone upon which merchants placed their money upon the official conclusion of a bargain, said to be the origin of the term "paying on the nail," and the pleasant old Elizabethan alms-houses with their cobbled courtyard, are well cared for and exhibited with pride by the citizens ; but they are not enough to give the town the savour of past things which, one feels, ought to belong to it.

It is, perhaps, interesting to recall, before leaving Barnstaple, that it was here that garrulous old Samuel Pepys found and married his wife, Elizabeth St. Michel, the daughter of a French Huguenot refugee. A number of such found a home in Barnstaple after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and French names, much altered, are still common in the town.

Past Queen Anne's Walk, across the railway, and soon you are in the open country again, with the estuary still on your left hand, though now to the south of you instead of to the north.

It is a dull highway, if any Devon highway can be really dull, that leads to Braunton, though Wrafton is a pleasant enough village, and it would have been tedious but for the

company of an almost intelligible Devon labourer. At the end of half an hour I gathered that he had been telling me a long story about a dog, but whether it was the hero or the villain of the piece I do not know. However, we parted very good friends, and I was grateful to him for his kindly interest in a somewhat taciturn stranger.

The question which always exercises my mind with regard to Braunton is whether to regard it as an estuary port or not. Once upon a time it must have been a port, and a little creek still makes a gallant attempt to reach it, but the main waterway is a good two miles away now, and such craft as belong to the village never get there. But I like Braunton, and its church is one of the most interesting in Devon.

The way to Saunton is straight on over the level crossing, but it is worth while to climb the hill to the west of Braunton, in order to see the magnificent view of the estuary obtainable from the top. Directly facing you is the mouth of the Torridge, and to left and right the broad estuary of the Taw; westward, Braunton Burrows lie beyond the green flats, and away beyond them again is the blue line of the Atlantic. Appledore is directly across the river, and on a clear day the masts of Bideford bristle at the end of the waterway of the Torridge. Even the Exe has nothing to show comparable with it.

The glory of Saunton is the two-mile stretch of virgin beach and the mile after mile of rollers which break ceaselessly upon it. The place itself consists only of an hotel or two and a few villas, but to pass beyond them, and look down

from the elevation of the road on to the sands is to realize what some of our fashionable seaside resorts must have looked like before the hand of man was their making and their undoing.

The estuary of the Taw and the Torridge is one of the perfectly beautiful things of nature. A few months ago I heard a horrid rumour that coal had been discovered in the neighbourhood ; I hope it is not true.

Teignmouth is a little seaside place in which I have never been able to take much interest, although it is very beautifully situated and looks across the narrow mouth of the Teign at a cliff of the most authentic Devon red, known as the Ness. It is a little town that has discovered the art of publicity, and it is growing in favour as a holiday resort year by year ; it has its reward. It will never rival Torquay, because it has nothing of the magnificent situation which makes Torquay practically unique among English seaboard towns, but it obviously means to try.

Tucked away behind Teignmouth, as though the opulent houses and the promenade and the tennis courts and the pierrots of the sea-front were rather ashamed of it, is the harbour. All harbours are fascinating if you have that type of mind, and there is always an attractive bristle of masts in the little pool at Teignmouth. They are mostly schooners and ketches with miscellaneous cargoes and even more miscellaneous crews, and whenever I have occasion to pass through Teignmouth the quay is the place I make for first.

Across the river is another poor relation of which

SHALDON

Teignmouth is a little doubtful, the village of Shaldon. Personally, I gladly pay my shilling and cross the toll bridge to exchange the smartness of Teignmouth for the narrow streets and the intriguing antiquity of Shaldon. This little fishing village is what Teignmouth once was, and it looks down upon the swollen pride of its neighbour as something unworthy. Shaldon is truly Devon in character, and in a little oak-beamed cottage there I have had splits and clotted cream which all the plate-glass cafés of Teignmouth together could not supply.

Parenthetically, this matter of splits requires clearing up. What is the proper name for them ? In North Devon I have heard them called chudleighs, round Exeter and the moor they are usually known as splits, and farther west they become farthing cakes ; there ought to be an authoritative ruling on the point.

For the estuary of the Teign I have a considerable affection. It cannot, of course, compete with either the Exe or the Taw and Torridge, but it is a pleasantly small edition for everyday use. I like to loiter upon the long toll bridge which spans it and watch the little pleasure craft racing leisurely round the buoys in the reach between the bridge and Teignmouth, or follow the slow progress of the big sand barges which are laboriously poled upstream by two men. This always seems to me to be the most primitive motive power in the world, as well as the slowest. I suppose it would not pay to fit these barges with small petrol engines, or it would have been done long ago, but it does not put very high the economic wage of

the men who all day long ply this monotonous, back-breaking trade.

Roads lead on either side of the estuary up to Newton Abbot, which is really not on the Teign at all. Both are pleasant, the southern one the more pleasant of the two, because as it climbs up through Combeinteignhead and Netherton the heather-covered slopes of Haldon stand up behind the estuary. I like to sit on the wooded hillside above Netherton and watch the slow tide ebb away from the shining mud banks below, as the red evening light fades from Haldon. Then, in the sweet-scented dusk, one drops down through Wolborough to the pleasant welcome of Newton Abbot.

A comfortable little town, this, very proud of its new railway station, and excited at the prospect of acquiring a Mayor and Corporation. Really, it is a railway centre, but if you know Crewe or Swindon you would never guess the fact. Here, at the foot of the old tower in the centre of the town, William of Orange was proclaimed King of England; for one brief glorious hour Newton Abbot basked in the limelight of history; then it went back to work and forgot about it.

The estuary of the Dart is another matter. This, surely, must be one of the most beautiful estuaries in the world; others may be larger, the Amazon or the Ganges, for instance, but Dartmouth men never consider them as serious rivals. From the old castle which guards the entrance, right up to picturesque old Totnes, reach after reach of shining water, bordered by magnificently wooded slopes, opens as the estuary winds its way inland.

Dartmouth itself is one of the old ports in England, as well as being one of the most historically interesting; the pageant of time played at Exeter is repeated with variations at Dartmouth and at Totnes. Why particularly the West Country should have been the nursery of Empire, and why so much of the history of these islands should be wrapped up with its story, I do not know. Remote from the Continent of Europe, from which have come from time immemorial both the troubles which have vexed and the advantages which have blessed these islands, it would scarcely seem to be the natural landing-place for either, and yet Danes and Frenchmen, Saxons and Spaniards, pirates, smugglers, adventurers and kings have all of them at one time or another set out for or from Dartmouth. It has been more than once the port from which beaten adventurers have left our shores, among them the great Warwick, the King-maker, after his retirement to Exeter, and time after time fleets of ships have sailed out between the headlands which guard the harbour, to do battle for England or for the Cross. Richard I took with him many Dartmouth ships and men when he sailed for Palestine, and one monarch after another has looked to this little western port to supply his needs. None has ever looked in vain. When one considers the resources of the times, the fleet of over thirty Dartmouth ships which joined those others from Topsham and Exmouth in the expedition against Calais was an extraordinary achievement.

Naturally the town was of prime importance, as were all western ports, during the Civil War, and it is not therefore

surprising to learn that the indefatigable Fairfax turned his attention to the taking of it. He was successful and the harbour and estuary served him as a useful base of supplies.

But Dartmouth has a long history of peace as well as of war. If it does not make the same bold claim to antiquity as is advanced by its neighbour, Totnes, it is secure in the evidence of its own picturesque streets. The Butterwalk, a covered way supported on pillars such as I have seen elsewhere in England only at Totnes and Chester, is only one of the buildings which in Dartmouth recall its long and colourful history ; I have spent long hours of absorbing interest in the crooked streets or in exploring the neighbourhood of the old castle, for the building of which the citizens received thirty pounds annually from the customs of their own town and Exeter. But chiefly I remember Dartmouth as a steep hillside of old houses with patterned roofs, golden in the sunshine of a Devon afternoon, with Kingswear across the highway of the estuary, itself busy with shipping. At Topsham or Appledore one is content with schooners and ketches and yawls ; at Dartmouth one has graduated to larger craft.

I have twice or thrice sailed up the estuary to Totnes ; it is a familiar holiday excursion and hardly comes within the compass of this book. It is, too, perhaps the most perfect experience of its kind. For my part, one of these days, I hope to buy a boat and make my abiding-place at Stoke Gabriel, a perfect village, whence I shall sail on golden days to the exploration of all the little creeks which the pleasure steamer passes by. I do not suppose I shall ever

THE BUTTERWALK, DARTMOUTH

really do this ; Devon calls into being too many of such hopes ever to be fulfilled in the remainder of a lifetime already half gone, but I should like to.

The estuary narrows as the boat draws towards the little village of Dittisham, where once it was my good fortune to light upon a regatta in full swing, and the stranger is apt to imagine that the estuary is at an end. Then, suddenly, the great water of Galmpton Creek is revealed, and the estuary begins all over again. It is many miles before the banks close in, and the trees begin to brush the sides of the boat as it approaches the landing stage at Totnes.

> "Yur wheer I stan', I takes my res',
> This be my woame, this be Totnes,"

said Brutus of Troy, speaking, like a considerate traveller, the dialect of the country, as he stepped ashore, and if you do not believe it there is the Brutus Stone to prove it. True, the stone is many hundreds of yards from the water's edge, but heroes had a way of doing these unaccountable things for the mystification of succeeding generations, and it is true, too, that recent disturbers of ancient legends have maintained that the Brutus Stone is really the Bruit-ers stone, or the stone from which, before the days of an altruistic press, news was imparted to the community by the town crier. Shakespeare uses the word bruit in this sense, and the explanation is a probable one, but I know a local archæologist who made himself very unpopular in Totnes by going there and saying so.

There is something almost dreamlike about Totnes; one is tempted to believe that it is not real, that it will one day dissolve and fade away. Totnes, the oldest or one of the oldest boroughs in England, retains more than any other in Devon the atmosphere of a more ample and a more leisurely age; it is in touch with antiquity. Remote, so that it has been very little spoiled, and so placed that it cannot conveniently be much enlarged, Totnes presents to-day a picture which cannot be very different from that which Defoe saw when he visited it. And Defoe was a very recent visitor in the long history of Totnes. Its charter is dated 1205, and it was the centre of a considerable trade for hundreds of years before that. Bideford, Exeter, Dartmouth and Totnes are the four towns in Devon which most stir the imagination, for Plymouth is too large and too modern, and of these Totnes is the easiest to dream in. No other town in Devon has preserved one of its ancient gates for the daily passage of its citizens; Launceston has such a gatehouse, but then, Launceston is in Cornwall. To stand at the foot of Fore Street and look up at the gatehouse, with the old houses on either side of it and the covered ways beyond it, is to take a peep into that past which we moderns are often at such pains inaccurately to re-create.

At Totnes the church helps in this picture. It is a beautiful Perpendicular church of red sandstone, with some of the most attractive gargoyles I have ever seen. The folk of Totnes must have been mightily feared of devils to have fashioned such gargoyles to scare them away.

But it is the atmosphere, the character, the *soul* of a town which always I find more absorbing than its details. Old doorways and gabled houses help to create that atmosphere and to give substance and significance to that soul, as also do steel furnaces and roaring factories if that is the nature of the town; but these things are only a part. The great beauty of Totnes does not lie in its magnificent surroundings, in the commanding majesty of its situation, or in the quaint mediævalism of many of its features, but in the feeling which one has there, that this is a town which carries brave memories bravely, that here is splendid tradition holding its head high in a world which yearly cares less for these things, that here is a name which will command men's dreams while one stone stands upon another. I have read somewhere that, at a banquet given by the Lord Mayor of London to all the Lord Mayors and Mayors of England, precedence of all was accorded to His Worship the Mayor of Totnes. I like to think of that; it was a graceful and a significant gesture.

No matter from which side you approach Totnes it stands well. Its long, single main street running from the river straight up to the old castle makes a brave silhouette of roofs from north or south; if you approach from Berry Pomeroy, it faces you with the grim reminder of the gatehouse astride the top of it. Save only Rye—and Rye is something self-conscious—there is no old town in England which is so calculated to stir a sluggish imagination.

I must have done with this business of estuaries. Between Start Point and the Cornish border there are seven of them,

and though I have visited them all and sailed the waters of some of them I do not know and love them as I do these others. Yet I know that to possess a little boat and stay a while at Frogmore, at the top of Frogmore Creek, at Knightsbridge, which is scarcely a bridge at all, but which is a delightful little town, at the picturesque village of Aveton Gifford, with the beautiful Avon estuary for a playground, or at Newton Ferrers (rather than Yealmton), would be to me a perfect content. The very map is a fascination.

Of the Tamar and the Tavy, and of the epic story of Plymouth Sound, this is not the place to write. These things cannot be sketched upon a thumb-nail.

So I turn from the estuaries to the hills, to the heather- and ling-covered slopes amongst which rise the tiny trickles to make these broad waters.

III

HEATHER AND LING

III

HEATHER AND LING

DARTMOOR is probably the most compact, the most clearly defined and, for its size, the most comprehensive piece of moorland in the country and, though, from motives of local patriotism, I confess to a preference for the moors of Yorkshire and the remoter north, I have a very true and abiding affection for Dartmoor. The natives tell me that Dartmoor is cruel, that it is grim and savage, that it is the haunt of evil spirits and that it is ill to be abroad upon it after nightfall, but I have not found it so. I have crossed Dartmoor in the treacherous mists and when the roads have been hidden by rare falls of snow, I have spent wild nights, snug in my car or tent, hidden away in the folds of its hills, by one or other of its rushing streams, I have been upon it in all weathers and at all hours, and neither man nor spirit has ever molested me. I have had occasional disturbing visits from the wild little Dartmoor ponies, attracted by my light, and one night, when a wandering cow put a cloven hoof through the flap of my tent, I thought for a moment that the devil was come to visit me, but there the tale of horror ends.

I do not say that Dartmoor cannot be dangerous. There are large tracts of bog which no man can cross, and there are remote rock-strewn slopes upon which the wariest may come

to grief. It is as easy to lose yourself in this as in any other considerable tract of unmarked country, but you have always the comforting assurance that ten miles in any direction will

BRENT TOR

bring you to some sort of human habitation. I admit that I would not care to venture off the beaten track on the moor without a good map and a reliable compass, but that is the merest common sense.

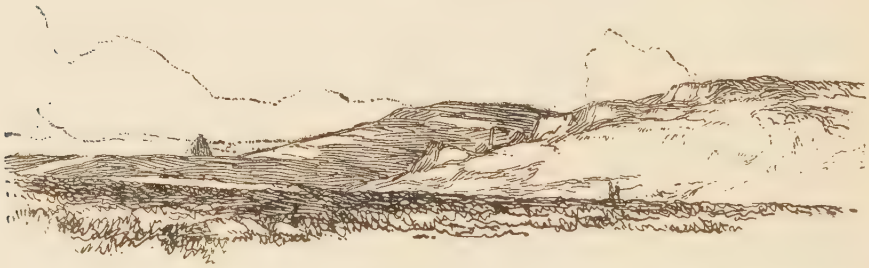
The truth of the matter is, the admirers of Dartmoor make a mistake when they insist upon its grim wildness. Of course Dartmoor is grim in places, and under certain conditions, but, then, so is Haldon or Woodbury. Any considerable expanse of bare heather, with a tumbled rock or two and a stunted oak or fir, looks grim in a driving mist and deepening twilight, but I know many parts of the North, especially in Scotland, which look just as grim under a blue sky and a blazing sun. This Dartmoor never does.

Truth to tell, Dartmoor is unique, and possessed of a very great fascination peculiarly its own, but it is due to the variety of its contrasts and its associations, rather than to its fabled grimness. The juxtaposition of rocky, serrated tors and the pleasantest and mildest of woodland glens is a characteristic of Dartmoor which it would be difficult to find so satisfactorily staged elsewhere. Every now and then the great rolling hills, with their strangely uniform caps of jagged rock, give way to valleys full of verdure, with pleasant streams and snug farms to dispel the illusion that Dartmoor is grim. Insist, if you will, upon the charm, the fascination and the imagination-compelling force of Dartmoor, but do not tell the stranger from the North that it is grim. He will laugh at you.

Dartmoor stands, a compact mass of tumbled hills and dales, well above the surrounding country, and from most parts of the moor, certainly from most of the tors, a great stretch of fertile plain may be seen, beyond the moor's edge. From the very heart of the moor, the hilltop below which is

Princetown, Plymouth Sound is clearly visible, shining in the sun, and nowhere, save in the hollows, does the wanderer feel that sense of utter loneliness and isolation which constitutes the real terror of the moors of the North. On Dartmoor you have only to climb to a tor-top, and you can stretch out a hand in any direction to the friendly homes of men.

When one turns to the history of Dartmoor, it is another matter, for its history began, and largely ended, before the rest of Britain had any conscious existence at all. Nowhere



NEAR PRINCETOWN

else in the country, save perhaps on the Wiltshire Downs, is there such evidence of primitive man. Here, high up on the moor, hundreds of feet above the dangerous forests and treacherous swamps of the lowlands, he lived in his thousands. Then the moor was populous as never since, a known familiar place to many hundreds of men who called it home, where now the casual ranger is the only person ever to set foot, and the average population is reduced to a decimal point to the square mile. Everywhere on the moor are the hut circles, the great

A DOORWAY, GIDLEIGH

unexplained stones and the primitive fortresses of men at whose character and occupations we can only guess. To stand upon a point like Hamildon Tor and look across the desolate waste towards Shapley, is to command a bird's-eye view of what was a thriving community before Troy was built. Below you is what is called Grimspound, the most remarkable collection of primitive dwellings which the moor has to show. Here men lived long before the age of bronze, sheltering themselves as well as they could from the chill Dartmoor mists, and protecting themselves as they might from the wolves and cave bears which haunted the fringes of the moor. What manner of men were these? What their beliefs, their religious customs, their hopes, their aspirations? Of what manner was their daily life, and what their knowledge of any world beyond the confines of their own kindly, familiar hills? Archæologists guess and speculate, but we know nothing. The farthest dim records we possess are those of the far, far descendants of these first dwellers upon Dartmoor; we can only stand in the stone circles which they have left scattered all over the moor and let imagination have rein.

Perhaps, on the whole, it is just as enlightening to pursue the method of investigation followed by a party of investigators whom I watched in the hut circles near Merrivale Bridge one summer's afternoon; they set a row of beer bottles upon the stones which primitive man had raised for their amusement, and threw pebbles at them. Their primitive ancestors would have enjoyed that game.

STONE CIRCLE, GIDLEIGH COMMON

There are many other monuments upon the moor besides the hut circles, the menhirs, or tall stones set up as monuments to the dead, the cromlechs, cairns and kistvaens, or stone chests for burial purposes. In various places long rows of upright stones still stand, notably at the upper end of the Erme Valley, at Downtor and near Merrivale Bridge; these are supposed to have been placed by friends or relations of

departed chieftains as marks of respect, but this appears to be supposition unsupported by evidence.

I make no pretence to archæological knowledge. For me the remains on Dartmoor are things almost beyond wonder, they carry the mind back too far for ordered thought ; only imagination is left.

The old stone crosses which are to be found at various places on the moor are different. These were used to mark the boundaries of lands belonging to various religious communities, and one old road at least, the now largely obliterated Abbots Way, leading from Buckfast to Buckland Abbey, may still be followed. It is an interesting afternoon's amusement to trace the way from cross to cross.

There is no doubt that Dartmoor is the scene of the very earliest mining in Britain. Here primitive man found the tin which he used in the manufacture of his bronze weapons and implements, and from here tin was exported—if such a word may be used in connection with this primitive trafficking —to many parts of the Continent. Most of the streams on the moor show somewhere or other the traces of the work of these or later mediæval miners, whose custom it was temporarily to divert the course of a stream and search its bed for traces of alluvial tin. This must have been a laborious process and have yielded little result for the labour involved ; but labour was cheap, and in the remoter ages at least, the knowledge and appliances necessary for the sinking of shafts was lacking. On the whole, primitive man seems to have made a good thing out of Dartmoor, and if we have now

deserted its mists and bogs, for the more kindly lowlands, that is not to say that our primitive ancestors were not very comfortable there. At any rate, one thing is certain, their occupation of the moor lasted longer than has ours of the lowlands.

I confess that I find its prehistoric remains and associations the most fascinating part of Dartmoor, but then I am used to

APPROACH TO DARTMOOR FROM THE SOUTH-EAST

moors; though they have a great attraction, stretches of heather and rock have no novelty for me. But to anyone who is unaccustomed to moorland country Dartmoor must be a sheer delight. It is so comprehensive; everything that a moor should possess, except size, you will find on Dartmoor. Its approaches are magnificent, whether you climb up from Plymouth through Yelverton with its wide-spreading village

green, or from the north through Moretonhampstead or remote lonely Chagford, whether you take the steep and difficult road from Ashburton over Dartmeet to Two Bridges, or approach the same central meeting-place of the moor from Tavistock, via that metropolis of primitive man, Merrivale Bridge. Before you, range after range of heather-covered hills and rocky tors, with steep, winding lanes and scattered groups of moorland ponies, promise a remoteness from civilization which, in justice, they more than half fulfil. Indeed, cavil as one may, it is possible on Dartmoor to feel a long way from one's kind, especially after midnight.

I drew my car in to the roadside one night, not very far from Grimspound, and made camp. There was no human habitation in sight, but beside me a little moorland brook made pleasant company ; on the hillside above me a row of tall stones, set up by primitive man, shone white in the moonlight, a ghostly company. I was all alone, and so, for more company, I got out the portable gramophone and put on a record. It was the Valse Triste of Sibelius, a pleasantly apt piece for the time and place, and it wailed and moaned very eerily in the empty spaces of the valley. The better to appreciate the music I turned out my light.

The mournful tune was drawing to a close when I heard footsteps and, looking out, I saw the figure of a man, running as fast as his legs would carry him, out of the accursed valley. The belated peasant on Dartmoor does not care for weird, ghostly music coming, at midnight, from nowhere. I expect that hospitable little valley has a bad name now.

In the nature of things all moors have their stories of travellers misled by pixies, witches, will-o'-the-wisps and what not. It is easy for foolish, frightened men to go astray and lose themselves in the treacherous bogs, or to find their way home, they know not how, in panic fright ; it is easy, too, to see vast, moving forms of unearthly and hideous shapes, when moonlight changes all the values ; many a man has run away from a Dartmoor pony in the darkness. Dartmoor is rich in legends. Many are the queer stories which it is still possible to hear in the little Dartmoor cottages, beside the glowing peat fires. I like best the Wish Hounds, that ghostly, noiseless pack of black dogs which a Satanic huntsman leads across the moor on moonless nights. Dartmoor folk hold that it is bad luck to meet the Wish Hounds ; I should think that they are probably quite right. I have never seen them myself, but I don't really mind.

The road from Exeter to the moor is a pleasant one, and the ascent from this side affords wonderful views over the rolling foot-hills. At Dunsford, a very charming village, half of the moor and half of the lowland, the road crosses the Teign, and then climbs up the steep hillside of a very beautiful valley, to drop and climb again to Moretonhampstead.

This is a typical moorland town, far more typical than Princetown, which exists only to serve the prison. It is not extensive, and it possesses no very outstanding feature, with the exception of the picturesque but dark alms-houses, built in 1637, and standing at the entrance to the village. It would indeed be difficult to say quite what it is which

DUNSFORD

gives Moretonhampstead its distinctive character, but there is no doubt that both it and Chagford, its neighbour, are different from any other of the villages of Devon.

THE MARCH OF PROGRESS AT MORETONHAMPSTEAD

In the neighbourhood of Moretonhampstead is Drewsteignton, surely one of the most picturesque of villages. I suspect that it has been touched up by the builder of the adjacent twentieth-century mediæval castle, the village

green is rather too like the opening scene of "Little Red Riding Hood"; I always expect an inrush of dainty sun-bonneted villagers holding hay rakes, and a glad, if falsetto cry of "Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah! Here comes the Squire." This has never actually happened to me in Drewsteignton, but I feel that it easily might.

At Chagford one may expect something different. There the streets fill annually with a mob of kicking, biting, strug-

SPINSTER ROCK, DREWSTEIGNTON

gling Dartmoor ponies, for it is here that the pony fair is held. It is very wonderful to see the way in which men skilled in the handling of these wild little brutes will push their way into the very midst of a whole penful of them, and emerge again without a bite or a bruise. If you are fond of ponies Chagford is well worth visiting at the time of the pony fair; if you are not, then keep a very long way away.

All about the fringe of the moor are these little townships

and villages, all of them with some distinctive charm of their own, and all of them more or less bound up with the life of the moor; of them all I like Widecombe-in-the-Moor the best.

It is, of course, well known; very many excursionists visit it every summer, and many thousands more who have never seen it, and probably never will, sing the epic story of Uncle Tom Cobley and Tom Pierce's Grey Mare with gusto; Mr. Eden Phillpotts has written the best of all his Devonshire stories about it. But Widecombe-in-the-Moor rises superior to its popularity; if it rather now tends to blossom into tea-shops and to display itself on picture post cards, it does so as a concession to visitors and without compromising its own simple dignity. All the same it is best to visit Widecombe in the late autumn or the early spring, when chars-à-bancs are hibernating and trippers are at rest.

It is not easy of approach, by whatever road you come, for it lies in a hollow surrounded by high hills, the steep roads up and down which make no concessions to wheeled transport; the sight of a loaded char-à-banc descending the road from Hay Tor always fills me with the gloomiest forebodings. Yet a great many people manage to get there.

I like best to come to Widecombe along the road which leaves the Moretonhampstead-Princetown highway at Merripit, just past the Warren Inn, although that other lane, running below Shapley Tor and passing by Grimspound is a fine way of approach. I choose this side, rather than the steep run down from Hemsworthy Gate, because there is a turn of

the road, just before you reach Widecombe itself, where you suddenly see the beautiful straight shaft of the church tower rising straight and high in the cup of the hills. From any other point the tower is dwarfed, but seen from here it is the hills themselves which seem of least account.

The tower is a fine piece of work, built by local miners as a thank-offering for the wealth which they found in the surrounding hills. It is very tall; indeed, seen at close quarters, it appears far too tall for the body of the little church at its foot. Round the coasts of Cornwall it is not unusual to find very tall church towers attached to very small churches, but there the towers serve a double purpose; they were built by men who looked for them from far out on the water.

The tower of Widecombe Church has had an exciting history, the true and correct account whereof, or at least of one of the most exciting incidents, is to be read, done into verse, on the wall inside the tower itself. I wish that I had transcribed it on one or other of my numerous visits to Widecombe, but perhaps it is best read on the spot; it needs the right atmosphere.

I suppose Hay Tor rocks, Widecombe, Dartmeet and Princetown, including Two Bridges, are the most visited places on the moor, but they are not overrun. These things are comparative, and though at times Widecombe may seem too full of one's fellow-men, or Hay Tor rocks a little overcrowded, one has only to remember some other of the beauty spots of our country to know that relatively here is solitude.

Cranmere Pool is not for the char-à-banc traveller; to get there you must walk and scramble over hills and down rocky dales, you must ford here and there a mountain stream, or leap from stone to stone across its boulder-strewn bed, you must be prepared for mists and bogs, and, if you are wise, you will take map and compass with you. Cranmere Pool lies in the very heart of the moor, on the northern slope of Black Ridge, where, within a mile of one another, rise four of Devon's most beautiful streams, the Dart, the Teign, the Tavy, and the Taw. It is a fine piece of country, the wildest that Dartmoor has to show, but it is only in the driest weather that it is a safe wandering place for the stranger. On all sides little streams take their rise, not honestly from out the earth, as they would in a limestone country, but by accumulating the slow oozings of great tracts of bogs. Cranmere Pool itself, the source of the Okement, is more than half such a bog; the visitor who expects a glittering mountain tarn is laying himself open to disappointment. I have never seen Cranmere Pool actually dry, but I have seen it when it was little more than a muddy hole in the surrounding waste.

However, it is not to see a mere puddle that one adventures over the moor. To penetrate to Cranmere from Okehampton or Lydford, itself an interesting and picturesque village, from Chagford or Two Bridges, means a fine tramp over the moors, with the added possibility of losing oneself and finding a bed in the heather. I have said that Dartmoor is not grim, but it presents a very colourable imitation of

grimness if you find yourself at dusk on the slopes of the Black Ridge, without any idea of the direction of home.

Dartmoor is a great playground, but you cannot know it from a car. Really to appreciate all that Dartmoor has to show, you must tramp the heather and ling with some good companion, like minded with yourself. And it is a lifetime's task ; you will not exhaust it in a summer vacation.

The greater part of Exmoor lies in the county of Somerset ; Dunkery Beacon, its highest point, and the typical little moorland villages of Exton, Winsford, Exford, Withypool and Oare, where Lorna Doone and Jan Ridd were married, are beyond the Devon border, as are the two delightful and quaint villages of Dulverton and Dunster. But the southern and western fringes of the moor, as well as about half of the northern edge, along the Bristol Channel, are in Devon.

I suppose Exmoor exists for most people as the scene of Blackmore's " Lorna Doone," and the Doone Valley is just within the Devon border. But it is a disappointing place, if you go to it fresh from a reading of Blackmore's book. It is, in truth, a fine moorland glen after the Exmoor manner, but the wonderful natural stronghold described by Blackmore does not exist. Still, Badgeworthy Water, which leads to the Doone Valley, is a very beautiful vale, one of the most beautiful of the moor. The whole of this northern edge of the moor is a natural watershed, and the traveller cutting across the moor westward from Badgeworthy Water would cross a dozen little combes, all running due north, to empty their waters into the Lyn.

When one sets out for Exmoor one is so soon in Somerset that it is a little difficult to keep, in memory, within the Devon border ; Exford has usually been my jumping-off place for these tours of exploration. But one more or less adventurous day on Exmoor was wholly in Devon, and that was when, starting from the picturesque little town of South Molton, I struck westward to the river Bray, and followed its winding course through High Bray and the finely wooded valley beyond, up to Lydcott and along the ridge to Ovis, with the river deep in a gorge of trees to the left, and thence, partly by sheep tracks and partly where there were no tracks at all, up through Challacombe on to Challacombe Common.

South Molton is an interesting little town, with a long, but uneventful history. It enjoys a sum of money annually from the benefactions of a South Molton boy who two or three hundred years ago became a wealthy merchant in London and whose bust occupies the place of honour in the quaint Market Square. Whether this bequest materially reduces the rates of the town I do not know, but the inhabitants all have a very contented look about them. South Molton also has the distinction of being the first place in England where Charles II was proclaimed King, though the proclamation, made by a group of Wiltshire gentlemen who rose against the Commonwealth in 1654, proved a little premature. Two of these optimistic gentlemen were subsequently disillusioned at Exeter.

On one occasion, about a week after the mayoral elections, I was very courteously received in South Molton by the new

Mayor. After unlocking the Town Hall and showing me over it, he opened the civic safe and assumed all the regalia of his office, but whether it was the more to please himself or me, I am not sure. This is the only occasion when a real Mayor has dressed himself up for my especial and private entertainment.

The river Bray is one of the main tributaries of the Tavy, and, overshadowed by the numerous beautiful rivers of Devon, has been much neglected. It is not a large stream, but it runs very pleasantly between its wooded banks, and, in its upper reaches, it has much the character of the boulder-strewn streams of Dartmoor. Unfortunately it is not possible to follow its banks for the whole of its course, for after the road leaves it at Brayford, a picturesque corner, it runs through private grounds. But the road is never far away, and once the valley becomes free of trees and plantations no great objection is taken to the riverside wanderer.

Challacombe is nothing but a small collection of moorland cottages, but it includes a welcome inn; this following of streams towards their source is a hot and tiring business. The last part of the climb, out on to the breezy uplands of Challacombe Common, is the best, and, once on the top, Dartmoor repeats itself. Here are the familiar remains of prehistoric man, the menhirs and burial barrows, and, just across the Somersetshire border, a moorland lake not unlike Cranmere Pool, but with more water in it. This is the source of the Barle, one of the chief tributaries of the Exe, the source of which is a boggy mile or so farther on.

A BYRE

From the top of Challacombe Common it is possible to drop down, by a rough moorland road, to Lynmouth.

Exmoor is, of course, very much tamer than Dartmoor. Even in its most remote parts it is under some sort of cultivation, at least in patches, but to cut thus across the western slopes is to discover a new region of rolling hills and valleys, practically unknown to the average tourist. Rough lanes and field paths cross Exmoor in all directions, and everywhere in the hollows are hospitable little inns, unspoiled by the easy money which comes in chars-à-bancs. I have on Exmoor had a good bed, with a supper of fish caught in the neighbouring stream, home-grown fruit and honey, with unlimited Devonshire cream, and in the morning a breakfast to match, for the price of a single meal in the more sophisticated parts of Dartmoor.

There are two more heather-covered ridges in Devon of which I wish to write before I come again to the lowlands: Haldon and Woodbury Common.

These two lie, like great bastions, on either side of the Exe estuary, so that it matters little which bank of the river you use, the broad water is backed by brown and purple hills.

Great Haldon is crossed by several roads and numberless tracks and paths; one of the roads, that running over the top and descending to Newton Abbot, is said to be Roman built, I know not on what evidence. It is a good road, as is also the newly surfaced road to Chudleigh, the main highway to Plymouth, but I prefer the lanes which drop eastwards from the main ridge, down towards the river. I was exploring

one of these one day in a car, somewhere towards Mamhead I fancy, though I am not certain, and the lane gradually narrowed and became more grass-grown until I was driving over a narrow strip of meadow between banks eight to ten feet high. There was just room for the car to pass, with the

A KEEPER'S COTTAGE, HALDON

tangles of wild flowers brushing along the mudguards and the brambles making vicious little clutches at the driver. Things were thus when I met with a flock of sheep and an old bearded shepherd. He paused, aghast, whilst the sheep scrambled as best they could round, under, and partly over the car.

"What 'ud 'ee do if 'ee met a cart?" he inquired.

"I don't know," I admitted.

"No," he said. "Nor I neitherr." And he went on his way shaking his head over the folly of men and motors.

But it was worth it, for a few yards farther on the road

THE LEY ARMS, KENN

dropped over the edge of the hill, and the whole broad estuary of the Exe lay below.

Haldon is a ridge of heather and gorse, with little patches of dwarfed and stunted trees, with, on its lower slopes, some magnificent woods; the run down from the top to Starcross

is through one of these woods, and I have never travelled a pleasanter road.

A great ridge of heather, whin and gorse, with an indifferent road along the top of it ; scattered groups of pines, glowing red in the light of the sun setting behind Haldon ; broad stretches of peaceful country, sloping westward to the shining

PEAK HILL, FROM WOODBURY COMMON

estuary of the Exe, with beyond it the brown and gold of Haldon Hill and the purple of the Dartmoor tors, and spreading eastward in rolling folds of moorland to the valley of the Otter, to Peak Hill, sharp against the deep blue of the sea, and to the wooded fall of the ridge behind Ottery St. Mary ; nearer at hand great red scars fringed with pines, where the

hillsides have been quarried; white curling roads and the tumbled remains of the fortifications of ancient man, broken by the twisted roots of the pines amongst which the darting rabbits have their homes; the deep Devon lanes of the lower slopes, where lovers used to linger: that is Woodbury Common.

I know of no other ridge like to it; the Hog's Back, between Farnham and Guildford, lacks the shining broad waters of the estuary on the one hand and the blue of the sea on the other. Woodbury is supreme, and of all the heather-covered uplands of Devon it has been my chief delight.

It is very small, on the map it occupies scarcely any space; it is not high as hills go, nowhere does it rise to six hundred feet, less than a third of the height of Yes Tor; and yet there is not on all Dartmoor any one place comparable with it. One could exhaust the adjectival resources of language and not do it the merest justice; a painter could spend a lifetime here and despair in his old age ever of catching its spirit. Woodbury is more than mere earth; men have kissed and killed on its heather-covered slopes, and ghosts walk. Here the Cornishmen who marched eastwards and invested Exeter, ready to die rather than do their service to God in the English tongue, were routed and for the most part slain, as Mr. A. T. Sheppard has told in "Brave Earth"; here Walter Raleigh, climbing from Hayes Barton up through picturesque Yettington, wandered and dreamed. I picture him sitting on the slope of Woodbury Castle, the whole of the estuary of the Exe

and the great plain of the sea spread out before him, seeing far-away things, and yet it may well be that I am wrong. Was Raleigh a grave boy, wandering here apart from his companions, losing himself in visions among the heather and bracken, or was he a boy like those Devon boys whom you will meet to-day on Woodbury, intent only on those games which we to our sorrow forget as we grow older? No one can say, but something which is of Woodbury, and of nowhere else, went to the making of that spirit, and to his last hour, betrayed by a dastard monarch, the peace and the mystery and the wonder of Woodbury were in his heart.

That west-bound purposeful motorist, who has hurried across these pages before, sees nothing of Woodbury. He crosses it without changing gear, on the great highway from Honiton to Exeter, part of the old road which the Romans built between Exeter and Bath. This crosses the northern end of the ridge; to follow its length to the sea you must turn south, a mile or two beyond Fairmile, at first through woods and tangled scrub, then up and out on the ridge itself. Midway, brave against the sky, stands a clump of ragged wind-blown pine trees, ringed by a Devon bank, an old outer defence of Woodbury Castle; from here, night after night through the long beautiful Devon summer, I have seen the sun sink behind Dartmoor and rise again from out of the sea behind Peak Hill, I have seen the moon, hanging low and large and red over the fringe of firs above Yettington or Colaton Raleigh, or high above the sea, with all the still world of Woodbury soft and colourless in its light. I can feel now

the little soft movements of the still air, and see the dark silhouette of the pine branches above me ; no bed ever made was as soft as the heather.

Beyond is Woodbury Castle, no castle in truth, but an old earthwork from which the Briton, and it may be the Roman too, looked out over the waters of the Exe. It is all trees now, with a keeper's cottage in the middle of it, and its ditches a tangle of briers, but it is easy to see that aforetime it occupied a position of great natural strength and strategical advantage. This is Woodbury's oldest monument ; prehistoric man has not left here any trace of his

GARGOYLES, OTTERY ST. MARY

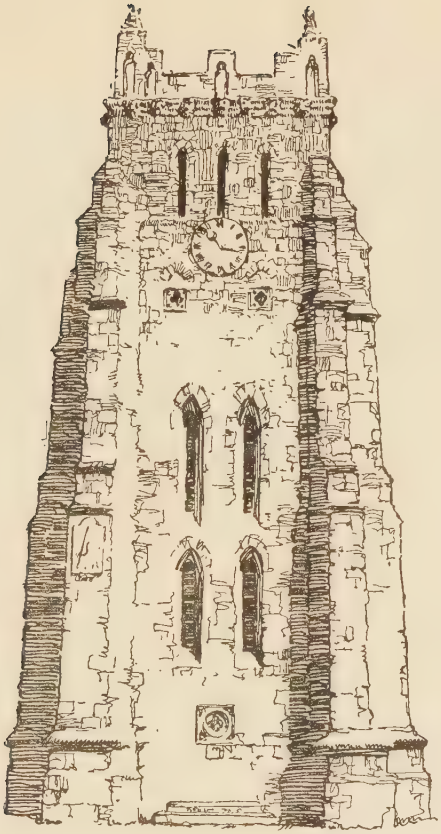
sojourn, if indeed he ever lived here. Quite possibly the place did not tempt him ; it was too small and too near the swamps of the Exe to afford the protection of a terrain like Dartmoor, and there was no outcrop granite for the construction of his hut-circles ; primitive man and his occasionally even more primitive descendant, the purposeful motorist, were at one in this, they pass Woodbury by.

Woodbury Common is ringed with villages, typically of Devon and unchanged by time. To the north-east is the little town of Ottery St. Mary, with its very beautiful old

church, built after the model of Exeter Cathedral, its quaint steep streets, paved with cobbles, and its associations with Thackeray—Ottery is Clavering in " Pendennis "—and with

GITTISHAM CHURCH

Coleridge, whose father was Vicar and Master of the Grammar School. Here the fate of the West Country was decided during the Civil War, when Cromwell came to confer with Fairfax, in winter quarters at Ottery.



SOUTH TOWER, OTTERY ST. MARY

This is a sweet and beautiful little town ; there is none pleasanter, I think, in Devon. I know an exile in the grim industrial North who was born and spent his boyhood in

STEPPING STONES, GITTISHAM

Ottery St. Mary : he will surely go to heaven, to make up for all that of which he has been robbed on earth.

Ottery St. Mary lies in the valley between Woodbury Common and that other beautiful ridge to the eastward of

EXMINSTER CHURCH

the Otter, known as East Hill, with Gittisham Hill beyond it. Gittisham village does not belong to Woodbury Common, but it is so typical of the perfect, unspoiled villages of this corner of Devon that I must write its name at least here; there is in all the village no scrap of corrugated iron to remind the traveller of home.

Venn Ottery, Harpford, Colaton Raleigh, East Budleigh, Woodbury village, Woodbury Salterton and Aylesbeare, all these lie close under Woodbury Common, villages as beautiful as their names, while just beyond are all those others which take their names from the little stream of the Clyst: Clyst St. Mary, Clyst St. George, Clyst St. Lawrence, Clyst Honiton and Broad Clyst; Devon is in the very sound of them. This is a whole countryside of pleasant streams and little forgotten villages, of rich pastures and noble trees, with Woodbury as a great backbone; here, in little, is all Devon, its greens and browns and golds, its red earth and its blue sea, its great, spreading sky and lazy white clouds, its rich slow speech and its deep content.

IV

RIVER BANKS

IV

RIVER BANKS

THERE are some persons so peculiarly constituted that they can never see a river without at once desiring to follow it to its source. A river, to them, would seem to be a sort of crime, to be tracked down and exposed, and they the detectives appointed for the task ; I am thankful that I am not like this.

If it is a fine sunny day, and I have anything on hand which urgently requires my attention, a river usually tempts me to lie upon its bank and listen to the sound of the running water ; nine times in ten I give way gracefully to this temptation, to the ultimate benefit of my soul and, probably, of my business. That, in my opinion, is what rivers are for. They provide a murmurous background for serene meditation, and their music has a very healthful way of making a great many things which may momentarily be taking up more than their fair share of one's mental horizon shrink to more proper proportions. It is really surprising how much one can neglect, and with how much benefit, whilst lying beside a gently flowing river ; negatively at least one is doing good, in so far as one is not positively engaged in doing ill ; few of us can be sure of as much in our active moments.

If some of the disturbers of the world's peace, from

Amen Hotep onwards, had cultivated this pleasant habit, the world would have been the better for them, instead of the worse ; and if such a thought as that is not enough to turn what might easily be regarded as positive laziness into negative activity, then I have no other to offer. It is all a question of angles.

So that I have no coherent story to tell of inoffensive waters tracked to their mountain lairs. Now and again some unexpectedly story-minded friend has persuaded me into some such expedition, in Devon or Derbyshire or Cumberland, but I do not go quietly. My own method is to happen across rivers accidentally, where, perhaps, my road crosses some old bridge, green with the moss of ages and wise with centuries of serene contemplation ; then I lean a while on the crumbling parapet and look down at the waving weeds and the still fish and the little ineffective fussings of the stream about the base of the old stone pier, or maybe I smoke a pipe with some village philosopher as full of affairs as I. It is a very harmless occupation, and one of the most disinterested I know.

I am very fond of bridges, and I am grateful to those old bridge-builders who scattered so many beautiful examples of their craft all over Devon. It is a county of beautiful bridges, perhaps because it is richer than most in beautiful rivers, and the bridges had to be worthy of them. Unfortunately this attitude of mind no longer obtains in Devon ; I have seen there some white concrete horrors which would be a disgrace even in an Empire Exhibition.

No one who has ever seen them can forget the two beautiful old bridges at Bideford and Barnstaple ; these are among the most beautiful of their kind in the world, and the towns to which they belong are justly proud of them. But these are monuments, collector's pieces ; it is the dozens of humbler but no less beautiful or quaint bridges which span the small

BRIDGE AT BOVEY TRACEY

beginnings of our rivers, not their estuaries, which remain affectionately in the memory. The Torridge has many, far above the queen of bridges at Bideford ; one beautiful one is just below Torrington ; the Taw, the Exe, the Dart, the Teign—you could travel from bridge to beautiful old bridge on any one or all of them, adding a philosophic chapter at each

until you had a whole volume. But it is little odds-and-ends of bridges, remembered for no obvious reason, or associated with some happening or some hour of friendly converse, which I like to contemplate. There is beautiful old Countess Weir above Topsham, spanning the Exe where it wanders

THE TORRIDGE AT TORRINGTON

lazily through fields yellow with buttercups; there is the little bridge at Dartmeet—beside the rushing waters which tumble tumultuously under its old stones I have more than once spent the night; there is Two Bridges in the heart of the moor; there is the old bridge, made of great flat slabs of stone, at Postbridge; there is a beautiful little bridge

hidden away below Stoke; there are three or four at Tavistock; there is the old bridge at Cowley, with its weir and rushing waterfall; there is the long causeway and bridge over the Clyst at Clyst St. Mary, and another over the same placid stream at Topsham; there is the straggling, unlovely toll bridge at Teignmouth, which can become a thing of beauty when the estuary is all alight with the reflection of an autumn sunset. The list could be continued almost indefinitely, not because these bridges are more beautiful than others, because all bridges are beautiful, even sometimes the modern contractor's nightmare in concrete, but because Devon is all little dancing streams and broad rivers. I know a painter who specializes in bridges, as some surgeons specialize in appendices; he must have a jolly life.

Among the rivers of Devon the Exe claims pride of place. It is not more beautiful than the Dart or the Taw or the Torridge, but on it stands Exeter, capital city of the county, and its broad waters have more than once been a deciding factor in the fate of the county itself. It has been a frontier of Empire, this river; behind it, for centuries, was a peaceful settled country, beyond it, a region of trackless hills and savage, unrestful peoples. Men kept guard over the fords of Exe as they would on the walls of a beleagured city.

From the dim beginnings of time men have sailed up the Exe to trade or to fight with those who dwelt where Exeter now stands. Learned men dispute as to whether the Phœnicians ever really came to Devon, whether their coloured sails and high banks of oars were ever seen on the shining

bosom of Exe ; of course they came, the imagination demands them, the romance of Exe demands them, the little coloured vignettes which for most of us constitute all the history that is worth knowing makes them imperative. Of course they came ; as well tell me that Chaucer's pilgrims never rode, a chattering, jingling, colourful crowd, along to Canterbury, or that Don Quixote never set out from La Mancha. I have sat on the rim of the old earthworks on Woodbury Common on still, hot afternoons, when even the little drowsing insects slept and the world was full of magic, and seen their sails far below, moving slowly up with the tide, great purple sails with strange emblems upon them, bellying out over the long, dark hulls. And I have heard the murmur of voices about me as the ghosts of forgotten garrisons chattered and pointed ; such things are real on afternoons like that in Devon. Why not ? Over the border, in Cornwall, nicely brought up children, who take prizes in secondary schools, are permitted to see fairies.

The Danes were regular navigators of the Exe. The city which was growing up on the high bluff above the narrowing estuary was well worth a visit, and many and bloody were the encounters between the settlers and their unwelcome summer visitors. Their sails were different from those of the Phœnicians ; you can tell them in a moment from Woodbury. They are darker and handier, there is something more sinister, more hawk-like about them ; the swelling port of the prosperous trader has given place to the lean and hungry look of the marauder ; there is a glint of weapons. Lay brands to

BRIDGE AT HARTLAND ABBEY

the signal fires on Woodbury, on Telegraph Hill and on Pennsylvania ; the Danes are upon us !

Then a tiny cloud slips before the sun and the drowsy spell is broken, the magic is gone, and I see a couple of battered yawls carrying sand to Exeter.

What a pageant of shipping links those yawls and ketches and schooners with the galleys which nosed their way up the winding channels between the mudbanks ; what a brave show of sail the old estuary would carry if we could call back those forgotten craft out of the past, and set them again sailing the waters of Exe ; what a gallant cargo of chivalry and reckless daring they would contain. We waste a great deal of time and money over the organization of civic pageants ; it is a pity that we do not in the same way retell the story of one of our great estuaries.

A short distance to the north of Exeter is the little village of Stoke Canon, which the Exeter-Tiverton road approaches over a stone causeway. It is a home of sylvan peace, a cluster of picturesque cottages about an old stone church, and away to the left of it is Exe. It has always been a favourite haunt of mine, this flat, rather marshy and, in early autumn, frequently misty valley, where Exe turns and twists without reason between rows of pollarded willows ; there are always so many little idle things to look at in this sort of country, little water fowl, water rats which take the water with a sudden plonk, trailing branches, still bearing the debris of the last flood, contemplative cows standing knee-deep in the cool stream, and the busy domestic activities of myriads of

insects. Then, so that man may keep his rightful place in the picture, there is the railway.

There are persons who dislike this railway, who say that it ruins the whole valley of the Exe. All the way from Exeter to the Somerset border it follows closely the course of the stream and the road, man's successive highways crossing and recrossing mile after pleasant mile, but I see no more reason for objecting to the one than to the other. I like this railway ; it adds variety and contrast to the landscape, and when there is nothing very much happening on the river or the road a train ambles by to divert me. This is no main line with its flying expresses and its hurry and bustle ; it is as restful as such things usually are in Devon ; it is in tune with its environment.

The river is very serene and placid and self-complacent here, very different from the unruly little fellow of the far-away Exmoor valley, but just as beautiful. All rivers are fascinating at all stages of their progress, from the little bubbling springs of their origin, to the last mingling of fresh water with salt, and at every successive stage you will find idle persons sitting upon their banks looking at them. It is strange how moving water has always, in all places and in all ages, had an irresistible fascination for the idle, whether they are idle by accident or by preference ; the row of blue-jerseyed fishermen who sit on the quay at Brixham and watch the running tide, had their counterparts in Carthage, and the idler who leans on the parapet of Exe bridge and stares at the water had a spiritual ancestor on the bridge

STEPS BRIDGE, DUNSFORD

over the Tiber at Rome long before Horatius gave it so much free publicity. And there is a sort of freemasonry of idlers which brings them all into one great company, a broad communism of small talk and matches ; I am proud to belong to it.

The Exe at Tiverton is a very typical English stream, neither too rapid nor too sluggish, with very pleasant backwaters and low-hanging trees ; I like the long reach south of the town, with its broad meadows and great trees.

Tiverton itself is an undistinguished little market town with the picturesque ruins of an old castle and many old houses. There would be more, but Tiverton has always been something unfortunate in the matter of conflagrations ; at various times no less than five or six great fires have raged here, one of which was so severe that Queen Elizabeth granted the town five thousand pounds in compensation. During the Civil War it was the scene of many skirmishes, although no pitched battle was ever fought here, and, like most West Country towns, it was held alternately by both sides. I do not know what happened, during these troubled times, to the wool trade, for which Tiverton was famous, but for the most part things seem to have taken a more or less normal course all over Devon during the interludes between the fighting. I do not know whether Tiverton retains any of the trade which once made its name known all over Europe, but I should think it is unlikely.

Tiverton is a town which one passes through on the way to other more interesting places ; by this I do not suggest that much interest might not be found in the little town

itself, but it is not so obviously apparent as in some others. For me it is rather the centre of a very beautiful and very rich agricultural district through which I must pass on my way to the hills and the heather of Exmoor ; I do not think that many travellers will find it much more.

When one comes to remember them on paper, one finds that rivers are very much alike. By this I do not mean that a casual observer would find it difficult to differentiate between the Nile and the Trent or the Amazon and the Dart ; we must observe some reason in these matters ; but in a county like Devon, where any river of any particular size must flow through similar country, a certain family resemblance is inevitable. It would be wrong to say that the Taw and the Exe are exactly alike, but they are really very similar ; a man who knew both might easily find it a little difficult to decide for one or the other, were he suddenly to find himself upon the bank of either.

The Exe rises among the hills of Exmoor and runs south ; the Taw rises among the tors of Dartmoor, a bare half-mile from the Dart, and flows north ; between them is a whole rich agricultural district, rising to the watershed of Rackenford Moor, nearly a thousand feet above sea-level. The Taw, like the Exe, runs for most of its length in company with a road and a railway, and I should find it difficult to say from memory which valley is the better wooded. I certainly remember many hillsides along the course of the Taw which seem lately, probably during the war, to have been stripped of their trees, and there is no doubt that the valley of the

Exe is the more picturesque, especially near Dulverton, where the enfolding hills are higher than any along the course of the more westerly river. But there are compensations ; I have never anywhere seen such masses of wild daffodils as grow in the springtime along the banks of the Taw ; the whole valley from Umberleigh to Eggesford is one golden glory.

The Exe and the Taw are plain, straightforward streams ; the Torridge is more whimsical ; I never knew where it rose, and if I had been asked, I should have hazarded a guess at Dartmoor ; after all, though a river, like a rumour, must have a source, it is its subsequent volume which is the more important. Then, one day when I was wandering rather aimlessly along the Cornish border, away up in the north-west corner of Devon, I came across a tiny trickle which was pointed out to me as the source of the Torridge. I am of a credulous nature, and I believed it ; if I had been one of your habitual sceptics, I should have insisted upon following that trickle to its mouth, in order to see for myself whether this unlikely thing were true or not. It would have taken a long time, and led me as far south as Hatherleigh, before it brought me back to within a short day's march of where I started.

The Torridge is one of those streams which seem to make no stir in the world for more than half their length ; it is not until its turns north, a couple of miles from Hatherleigh, that it really becomes of any consequence. From here to Torrington it is one of the most beautiful of rivers.

It is a strange thing, but, whereas I like best the estuaries of the Exe, the Taw and the Torridge, it is the Dart which I

prefer as a river. In the case of the estuaries it is the great spaciousness, the noble breadth, backed by beautiful hills, and the great shining expanse of water which attract, but in their upper reaches these rivers are too aloof. The Dart is not like this. For more than half its course it is an intimate, riotous playfellow, as yet unsobered by any thought of the dignified estuary below Totnes ; it seems for ever unable to resist the temptation to play with just one more heap of tumbled rocks before growing up, and the laughing, gurgling game is so jolly that it has to be continued. Little foaming cascades and swift, dark rapids, high-backed bridges and close, green, sheep-nibbled turf to the water's edge, eddies and backwaters and deep, clear, cold rock-bottomed pools : that is the Dart I love.

The Exe, the Taw, the Torridge and the Tavy are rivers which one knows here and there, but the Dart is the sort of stream of which one explores every inch ; some rivers are like this, particularly mountain streams ; they lead you on farther and farther, not because of any academic desire to discover their source, but because each new mile is a new delight.

The Dart begins as two streams, the East Dart and the West Dart, which join at Dartmeet. I like the triangle of moorland between them, bounded on the west by the road from Two Bridges to Postbridge ; in its centre is Laughter Tor, and round two sides the Dart laughs back for company. It is a jolly place.

Lower down the Dart plunges into a gorge with wooded sides, but, if you will take the trouble to plunge after it, you

will find the same rough and tumble, harum-scarum stream at the bottom; there is a high bridge—Holne Bridge—not far from Ashburton, from which you may look down upon the Dart, still tumbling among heaps of rocks. It is a very beautiful corner; I have often made a halt there.

Between Dartmeet bridge and Totnes the Dart passes by three places in which I have always taken an interest, my only excuse for mentioning them here; they are Dean Prior, Ashburton and Buckfast Abbey.

Of these the most interesting to me is Dean Prior, for it was here that the poet Herrick spent many years as vicar of the little church, both before and after the Civil War. Herrick grumbles, in verse, a great deal about his exile and his isolation in the midst of rude and unmannerly peasants, but Dean Prior is a delightful village, and I find it difficult to justify his complaint. It is a straggling place, not grouped picturesquely round its church as are most Devon villages, but the countryside across which it straggles is a very charming one, not sufficiently of the moor to share in its bleak character, but retaining much of the charm of its combes and hills. I fancy that the truth of the matter is that Herrick was really very contented in his country vicarage—why else should he be so ready to return to it after the Restoration?—but that a little poetic grumbling suited his mood and his muse now and again; certainly few poets have sung with his freshness and sweetness of the simple joys of the country. When I walk through Dean Prior, or look into the cool interior of Dean Church, I like to think of Herrick as the

tolerant, amused observer of life, rich in the fewness of his wants, and quite content in the contemplation of rural manners and human follies, eked out by a poetic passion for Julia. We all of us grumble now and again, but we are most of us fairly contented on the whole.

Ashburton attracted me at once when I learned that it possessed a Port Reeve, and immediately I went to have a look at him. Personally he was not impressive, but his office is interesting ; I do not fancy that Ashburton was ever a port—the Dart is not exactly a navigable river hereabouts—but about the existence of the Port Reeve there can be no possible doubt whatever. I have never found out what he was really for.

This quiet little town was once the centre for the district of both the wool and the mining industries, being close to the sheep runs and the mines of Dartmoor, and convenient for the port of Dartmouth. But evil days fell on both industries ; the factories of the North and the more easily obtainable tin of overseas mines taking away its trade. It still deals in wool, but it no longer holds the pride of place of the days when it was the most important of all the towns contributing " kersies " to the Exeter market. Its church and its grammar school, once a church, are interesting, and the old town has a flavour.

Buckfast Abbey is one of the most interesting places in Devon. Here on the sight of an old Benedictine Abbey dating back to the Saxons, a number of monks are building their own abbey, exactly as the monks of mediæval times

built the beautiful abbeys whose ruins we preserve and visit to-day. The abbey has a long history, beginning about the year A.D. 1000, and since then has passed through many hands. For a long time it was in the possession of the Cistercians, great traders in wool, and was one of the richest of their abbeys; the Abbots Way, still marked by stone crosses on Dartmoor, was probably the trading way by which they carried their wool to Plymouth, and the name of the abbey stands on the roll of "Gild Merchants" of Totnes. After the Dissolution the great abbey was allowed to fall into ruins, and at the beginning of last century much of what remained was pulled down and the stone used for the building of a factory.

All this might be written of almost any of the abbeys of mediæval England, allowing for the differences of detail; the fact which gives Buckfast Abbey its particular significance and interest is its present-day restoration. To see Fountains or Rievaulx or Bolton or Whitby in the building would be to go back to very remote times; here at Buckfast those scenes are being re-enacted. The monks are themselves the masons and the carpenters, the glaziers and the metal workers, and to sit in the pleasant shade of the great trees which surround the abbey, and watch these men, wearing the same dress and busied on the same work as their predecessors on this spot, is to put the clock back ten centuries. We organize pageants and shows in our old towns in order to make their pasts live again, but they are only make-believe at the best; the modern clothes of the watching crowds kill the atmosphere,

and the car-park is the most essential part of the organization. Here it is all real ; the simple fact of men continuing a tradition, doing a daily task which takes no account of centuries.

They are a hospitable company, and more than once they have entertained me well. I shall visit Buckfast Abbey again, as much for the pleasure of sitting and talking with these simple men at the end of their day's work, as to see how this piece of work, lifted out of time, is progressing.

In looking over these rambling notes, I find that I have very much neglected a town and a river, Tavistock and the Tavy. I do not know why I have done this, except that my pen does not seem to have wandered much in that direction, although I have frequently stayed at Tavistock and made it more than once my base for excursions all over the western edge of the moor.

The River Tavy is not unlike the Dart, near the source of which it rises. It is not a long or a great stream, and has always been overshadowed by the Tamar, the natural boundary of Devon. When Devon became comparatively civilized and it was necessary to choose some western barrier which could be successfully held against the wild men of Cornwall, it was the Tamar and not the Tavy which was chosen. But it is a very pleasant stream, and the fishing, I am told, is good ; certainly it is picturesque, and its lower wooded reaches, down to its subsidiary and rather swampy estuary, are very beautiful. I have an affection for both Alston and Yelverton, villages between which, though at some miles

distance, the Tavy runs, and the little Denham bridge has often been my way of getting from one to the other. Just here the Tavy can compare with any of its Devon rivals.

Tavistock is to-day an uninteresting little town, but there have been great doings there at one time and another. The stories of King Edgar, Ethelwold and the beautiful Lady Elfrida, of Eulalia Glanville, burned alive at Barnstaple in 1590 for the murder of her husband, of the unhappy Mary Fitz, three times a wife at the age of sixteen, and last of Sir Francis Drake, world navigator and popular hero, ought one of these days to make of Tavistock a name known to every lover of the wordless drama of the films. There is great matter in these stories ; out of one of them Ben Jonson and Dekker made a play called " Page, of Plymouth." I do not often visit cinemas, but when those persons who order their foolish plots turn to the legends and histories of Devon for their materia, there will be something worth going to see.

At one time a great abbey stood where is the open square to-day, but its stones have become incorporated in the church and the hotel and the town hall, and only a gateway and a tower or so remain. The river, which runs behind the hotel and the vicarage, is exactly the sort of stream by which abbey builders loved to erect their cloisters and towers ; the murmur of the running water helped their meditations.

I like the road which runs from Tavistock to Okehampton and thence to Exeter, because it is so easy to get from it up on to the moor ; even if your object is only to take a look at

the moor from a distance, it would be hard to find a better road. On the way it passes through Lydford, famous for its tourist-frequented gorge and its old castle, once the stannary prison, and not far from Tavy Cleave; there are a great

THE PLYM AT WIGFORD DOWN

number of hut circles here, and it is a piece of fine moorland, with a wonderful view.

The Plym is a stream in which I have never been able to take very much interest. It is the least of the rivers which

empty into Plymouth Sound, and yet it gives its name to the port and the great water upon which it stands. I have never made any attempt to explore the Plym, but I remember with pleasure the view of it from Wigford Down, when one day Russell and I crossed that resort of primitive man on our way to the ancient activities of Drizzlecombe.

The Erme is another river which, apart from a slight acquaintance with its estuary, I know only as a boggy and difficult highway leading to some of the most remarkable of the Dartmoor hut circles and to what is certainly the finest of the stone rows. The climb is worth while if you have a taste for these things, and there is a little pool just below them which makes a splendid bathing pool on a hot day; but, if you follow the way we went, you will probably fall into it anyhow. A melancholy shepherd sat on the top of Quick-beam Hill and watched us with unqualified disapproval; we are all of us, I suppose, descended from primitive man, but that shepherd is not descended quite so far as most.

On the whole, I think that rivers are to be seen, to be enjoyed, to be watched, to be bathed in or slept by—anything but to be written about. It is an unprofitable labour; running water is one of the most beautiful things in nature, but it is no use in a fountain pen.

V

ACROSS DEVON

V

ACROSS DEVON

TO travel from Topsham to Bideford is to cut Devon in half, and it is a road which must very often have been travelled by the Devon worthies of whom Prince tells, for in the early seventeenth century these two ports divided between them the greater part of the trade with Virginia and the wonderful new El Dorado of the West. The great noblemen and the squires of the county were the real business men in the days when commerce and adventure went hand in hand, when to be a gentleman-adventurer in the footsteps of Drake and Raleigh was the dream of every Devon youth, and when it was the man with a sword in his hand, and not he with a pen behind his ear, who made his fortune. Then the road between Topsham and Bideford was the link between the two chief ports whence sailed these golden ventures, and along it travelled the men who manned them and the men who pledged good acres of Devon earth to send them forth.

It does not need much imagination to see them. The road holds still so much of its character; the little towns and villages through which it passes are so remote from this modern world of ours, that the demons of speed and efficiency which control it pass them by. Just so must Newton St. Cyres have looked when Walter Raleigh, with the grim walls

of Rougemont at his back, rode along its narrow street *en route* for the northern port ; Torrington on the hills has changed little since Grenville passed through it to take counsel with his fellow-adventurers at Topsham or Dartmouth or Plymouth. Crediton, too, is a little town which is deep sunk in a centuries-old sleep, or I am much mistaken. Once upon a time Crediton was a busy and flourishing town ; indeed, Crediton men will tell you, in the doggerel rhyme of the local proverb,

> Crediton was a market town,
> When Exeter was fuzzy down,

but there is no foundation, other than local patriotism, for the assertion. There is, however, no mistaking the deep sleep which has overtaken Crediton now, a sleep deeper even than that of its old rival. Deptford Public Libraries

In fact, one always has the feeling in Devon that time counts less than it does elsewhere ; it is not that it passes more slowly, but that it brings less change with it. Besides, there is more of it in Devon ; I have never yet known a Devon man or woman who had not time to put anything or everything off until to-morrow. More than one galleon of Spain was wrecked on the coast of Devon, and it may be that the Spaniard's motto was washed ashore, among other things.

But all of this does make a county delightful for the traveller wishful to beguile his journey by re-peopling a glowing past. In Devon his task is half done for him ; the scene is still set, only the characters are missing. The

ships that sail from Bideford or Appledore to-day are the counterparts of those others which adventured over half a world; the rings from which they slip their cables once held the "Golden Hind" or the "Revenge" fast to England. From these quays sprang an Empire.

We will follow this road from shore to shore, through towns and villages older than Roman Britain, across the track of half a dozen risings, rebellions and civil wars in this most peaceful England. We are apt to forget these things. The traveller in Belgium is surfeited with the scenes of forgotten battles; wherever he goes he soon learns to take them as a matter of course; but England has been blessed with a more peaceful existence. It has always been our careful habit to fight our battles on someone else's land when we could, and so we have grown unaccustomed to the thought of warfare in our own quiet lanes and villages. No one who was in Belgium in the early days of the Great War but was impressed by the matter-of-fact, even phlegmatic, way in which the Belgian peasant put together his few belongings and, at a moment's notice, left his home to be battered into an unrecognizable ruin. It was in his blood, it had happened so often before; the British farmer, one felt, would have made more fuss about it.

Along this road, often with Exeter or one of the vital ports as their objective, have moved the forces of heathens and Christians, of conquerors and conquered, of Britons, Danes, Saxons, Normans and Englishmen, religious and political insurgents, self-seeking adventurers and self-sacrificing

patriots; it has seen some brave pageants which before evening have become hopeless and disorganized routs, and it has seen stately processions which have led only to the scaffold; it has witnessed the rise and ebb of the fortunes of one leader after another, and it has seen them all vanish away into the dust of forgotten things. There are few roads in England more vividly identified with the history of England.

But its monuments are not all such as tell of events which have changed the course of history or altered the destinies of a nation; it has, too, its records of personal quarrels and spites. A bare mile or so from Topsham the Exe is spanned by an old causeway bridge known as Countess Weir, built, not for the convenience of the purposeful motorist hurrying towards Torquay or Cornwall and anxious to avoid the narrow streets of Exeter, but because nearly seven hundred years ago a woman quarrelled with the burgesses of that town and took her revenge of them of throwing an impassable weir across their waterway. Isabel de Fortibus was not a woman to be trifled with, and the citizens in Exeter found to their disgust that there was nothing to be done about it. The ships which had previously been able to come up the river to the Exeter quays when the tide served were now obliged to discharge their cargoes elsewhere; Exeter ceased to be a port, Topsham became one. But the citizens of Exeter were men of resource, even if they were a little slow in taking counter-measures, and by the time of Elizabeth a canal had been constructed. It took Exeter something over

three hundred years to circumvent the Countess Isabel, but that is fairly quick work—in Devon.

Exeter never really recovered its position as a port. Those three hundred years had seen Topsham firmly estab-

GLASSHOUSE LANE, COUNTESS WEIR

lished, and, although both are now no more than occasional places of call for the smallest of coastal vessels, Topsham enjoyed full two hundred years of prosperity before the age of big ships sent trade to more accessible quays. The Countess Isabel only anticipated the inevitable revenges of time.

The road enters Exeter by the old South Gate; but, unlike many of our old towns, Exeter has failed to preserve any of the old gatehouses. Small inscribed stones now mark the spots where they stood, but one could wish that time and the ruthless hand of the improver had dealt more kindly with them. They serve no useful purpose to-day, but Exeter might well have spared them standing room; not one of them but has been bought over and over again by the spilling of English blood.

Exeter can find no real place in this book, nor is mine the right pen to undertake the task of describing and cataloguing its antiquities or its links with the past, but the traveller from Topsham to Bideford may well pause as he passes between the gabled houses which stand shoulder to shoulder with its modern shops. There is no town in England with a longer history. Men were living at Exeter when London was a waste of Thames-side marshes, when Rome was building, and, it may be, when the foundations of the great pyramids of Egypt existed only in the mind of their unknown architect. No one knows how long ago it is that men first made their abiding-place on the bluff overlooking the river upon which Exeter stands.

Exeter was for many years the western terminus of the great west road of the Romans, but their road was built on the site of tracks far older; they organized, they did not drive a new way through the wilderness. At Exeter, so far as we know, they stopped, although Roman stones and remains have been discovered farther west, even upon

Dartmoor itself, witnesses to a possible later extension of the great Roman way. But the tracks went on, to Land's End and to the bays and creeks of the far western shores to which, long before the Roman conquest, wandering traders found their way from the Mediterranean. It was upon Exeter, the Caerwisc of the Britons, the Isca of the Romans, that these tracks converged ; from the beginning of organized life upon our island Exeter has been the gateway of the west.

Its earliest beginnings are shrouded in a mist which imagination pierces more satisfactorily than history, and it is not until the time of Alfred that the latter becomes a sure guide. The rich estuary of the Exe was a tempting objective to the marauding Dane, and more than once they penetrated as far as the stronghold which Alfred built, probably upon the site of older British defences, and which was later to become the proud castle of Rougemont. But the surest defences of the city were still the steeps towards the river and the Roman walls which crowned them, walls which lasted down to Norman times and which, hundreds of years after Alfred's day, still served to keep the Danes at bay. I do not think that any trace of these walls remains to-day, and Rougemont itself is now only a picturesque ruin in a public park.

The Danes were always anxious to lay hands upon Exeter, and upon one occasion, repulsed from the riverward side, they attempted a turning movement from the north-east. They were met at Pinhoe, a picturesque little village on the Taunton road, by the men of Exeter, and so fierce an action

ensued that the defenders found themselves in danger of having no more arrows with which to carry on the fight. The days of organized supply columns were not yet, and it was the parish priest of Pinhoe who was dispatched post haste to Exeter for reserves of ammunition. How the combatants carried on the struggle during the time which it must have taken the good man to cover the four or five miles to Exeter and back I do not know, but he arrived with a store of "arrowes" in time to turn the tide of battle in favour of the defenders. The living of Pinhoe still carries an annual pension of something under a pound sterling in recognition of the expedition and initiative of the parish priest.

Alfred and Athelstan; Edward the Confessor, who transferred the head-quarters of the see from Crediton to Exeter; William the Conqueror, who crossed a little stream, now covered, which ran at the foot of the Pennsylvania road in his attack on the city; Henry II, who granted a charter to the citizens; Edward and his Queen Eleanor, who held court at Exeter during Christmas week in the year 1285; Henry VI; Richard III, who amused himself by causing some of the followers of Henry, Earl of Richmond, to be beheaded outside the Guildhall; Henry VII, who led Perkin Warbeck captive through the streets from which, after burning the north gate and forcing the east gate, he and his men had been driven in disorder; Henry VIII, who made Exeter a county with a sheriff of its own; Elizabeth, who is said to have granted the city its proud motto of *Semper fidelis*; Charles I; Queen Henrietta Maria, who gave birth

in this city to the Princess Henrietta; Charles II, who celebrated here with the ever-faithful citizens the restoration of his dynasty to the throne; and William III, who, as William of Orange, entered the city, being new landed at Brixham, with a gorgeous company—all these monarchs have at one time or another touched the old city with romance and colour. Perkin Warbeck is not the only insurgent to have entered Exeter. Geoffrey of Monmouth made a state entrance into the city with a great company of cavalry and foot, and in 1549 another army of religious enthusiasts, Devon and Cornishmen, brought the defenders of Exeter to grave straits before they were relieved by Lord Russell. Of this, known as the Prayer Book rebellion, Mr. A. T. Sheppard has made a great and beautiful historical romance, another of the brave books of Devon, of which I have written elsewhere.

Exeter played its part with most other West Country towns in the Civil War; the alarums and excursions, the plumes and the trumpets, the cropped heads and the love-locks, were seen and heard in its streets. The campaign whereby Fairfax subdued the West makes interesting reading and much of the fighting took place along this road. Exeter was twice besieged, once early in the war by the Cavaliers, an investment which was little more than a parade and which lasted only fourteen days, and subsequently by Sir Thomas Fairfax.

Not only war has touched the life of the city. For uncounted centuries it has been the centre of the trade of

the West. The Tuckers' Hall in Fore Street is witness to the great industry with which Exeter was at one time identified, and in its days of greatest prosperity woollen goods to the value of a hundred thousand pounds would be sold weekly in the courtyard of the New Inn. The trade has gone the way of the captains and the kings, but the courtyard of the New Inn, glassed over and converted into a palm court, but still with its old cobble-stones for a floor, remains to stir the imagination and to call up pictures of the past.

Exeter's great and noble cathedral is known to every one who cares for beauty in stone. The labours of many bishops of Exeter have gone to its making since Edward the Confessor installed Leofric as the first of their number, and many have been the changes to which the very fabric of the cathedral has been subjected. Bishop Quivil incorporated the two great transeptal Norman towers in the cathedral itself, and subsequently the whole of the arches of the nave were converted from Norman to Gothic. This must have been an enormous undertaking. I have walked along the whole length of the nave and choir on top of the arched inner ceiling of the cathedral and beneath the leaded roof, and it is only up here, in the dim silence of this vast place, that the mind can really grasp the nature of the difficulties which had to be surmounted. The long, unbroken roof of the nave and choir is said to be one of the longest in existence, but such statements do not really touch the imagination. By the courtesy of one of the cathedral officials I climbed up to the leads outside the east window and looked through one of the

leaded panes, which has been made to open, just under the point of the arched roof. The west window seems to be an infinity away.

Exeter is a very beautiful cathedral, and it stands finely when seen from the river. How nobly it must have dominated the city when this consisted of nothing but a cluster of gabled houses huddled about its towers; the marks of the roof beams of these are still to be seen on the external walls of the north tower.

It has more than once been my privilege to sit high up in the organ loft during Evensong in the cathedral with the worshipping crowd below and the glowing light of a Devon afternoon in summer shining through the windows. It is an unforgettable experience.

I have lived for years in Exeter, and it has a busy every-day existence of its own, but its real wonder must always be in those pictures of the heroic past which it, of all English towns, possesses most surely the character, and induces most surely the mood, to recall.

At Cowley Bridge the road for Bideford leaves the valley of the Exe and soon drops into Newton St. Cyres.

I have said that Devon is a county of contrasts, but Newton St. Cyres is so unique that I do not know of anything with which even to contrast it; I have seen villages in Brittany which rather reminded me of it, but never anything quite like it. All the houses are thatched, all are white-washed, and most of them are joined together in a double row on either side of a crescent street, but that is no description

of Newton St. Cyres. Many villages possess groups of thatched and whitewashed houses, but I have never found one which seemed to exist with quite the simple directness of Newton St. Cyres. I know of no other way of describing it ; the cottages are so much of a mind, that it would seem as though you had here a whole village community with but one single thought. I do not suppose that this is so, presumably the inhabitants of this village have those differences of opinion which in other villages are not unknown, but their environment does not suggest them. Newton St. Cyres is a beautiful whole, one thing, one idea, undistracted by disharmonies ; it must have been made thus, one feels that it is impossible that it should have grown. It began, finished and perfect. If any speculative improver adds a brick to Newton St. Cyres, I hope that he will meet with the fate that he deserves.

When Crediton lost its bishop to Exeter it seems to have lost hope as well. Possibly faith and charity disappeared with the bishop, and the third desirable virtue lost heart. Be that as it may, I know of no little town which conveys quite the same impression. Things somehow do not seem really to be worth while in Crediton ; time exists, of course, as fourth dimensional as it is elsewhere, and space has periodically to be filled, but these things have no sort of relation to any cosmic significance. The prevailing opinion seems to be that there Crediton is, an incontrovertible fact, and one might as well make the worst of it.

I do not know why Crediton has this effect upon me,

NEWTON ST. CYRES

and, for all I know, I may be alone in this. Indeed, I am probably wronging Crediton. It has a very beautiful church, and I have come across old houses there which would be monuments in many greater towns; and yet it has always been difficult to arouse sufficient interest to bring Crediton back to life. Perhaps it is because a sort of cloud of ill luck has always hung over Crediton, for not only did it lose its bishop to Exeter, but it lost also its woollen market. It must have seemed to Crediton a little hard that Exeter should thus despoil it of the two things upon which its spiritual and temporal welfare rested. Temporally it does not seem to have recovered, but spiritually it was comforted by a collegiate church with a precentor, a dean, eighteen canons and eighteen vicars. Even this does not seem to have satisfied the men of Crediton, for it was here, with the burning of the Crediton Barns, that the Prayer Book rebellion really started.

From Crediton to Great Torrington is as pleasant a road as anyone would wish to travel on a summer's day. Soon it leaves the long highway which, together with the railway, follows the Taw to Barnstaple. This road, too, cuts Devon in half, and must have been a general trade route long before that from Crediton to Bideford, but I prefer the second; there is, to my mind, something parasitic about a road which follows a railway, even though I know that the railway is the intruder. So we will leave Devon's real north-and-south highway, and climb over the rolling hills to Winkleigh, a pleasant little village with a fine view of Dartmoor to the southward.

I have been unable to discover any claim to fame on behalf of Winkleigh. Its inhabitants have "heard tell" that the Cavaliers used it as a sort of head-quarters for a time, owing to its commanding and central position, but they are neither certain nor particularly interested. Winkleigh must stand by itself for what it is, a peaceful and unpretentious

WINKLEIGH

little hamlet, with a magnificent view waiting for whomsoever has sufficient perseverance and energy to climb to the top of its church tower.

I have climbed a number of church towers in Devonshire ; it is a pastime which appeals to me, not because I like to look down upon my fellow-man, but because there is something to my mind very conducive to contemplation in being raised

up above the level of the surrounding earth. The passage through the cool, dim interior of the church, and the dark climb up twisted and worn stone steps give a sense of detachment, and then, suddenly, there appears the square of brilliant sunlight through the little door at the top, and as you step upon the leaded roof a new, unfamiliar world is at your feet and the clear emptiness of air all about you. Philosophies should be written upon church towers.

I like Beaford Moor, to which the road climbs from Winkleigh. It is not as familiar or as beautiful as Woodbury Common, nor does it command the magnificent views which lie about that great ridge running towards the sea, but its golden-brown heather and flaming yellow gorse are a relief from the rich pasturage of the lower levels. There was a little town of wooden huts here during the war, but I am glad that I did not see it. I was stationed for a time in a camp of hutments on a common near Hindhead, and it seemed to me a pleasant enough place with pine woods all about it, but when six or seven years after the war was over I revisited the place, and lunched upon the spot where the old mess hut had stood, I discovered that it was one of the most beautiful places I had ever seen.

Beaford Moor itself is not of any very great extent, but it is the centre of a pleasant watershed running roughly north and south and feeding the streams of the Taw and the Torridge. It is possible to follow a road from Winkleigh to Bideford which runs along this ridge, to the eastward of Great Torrington. All along the sides of this road little

streams rise, often within a few yards of one another; those on the left of the road flow westward to the Torridge, and those on the right eastward to the Taw, and their waters do not meet until the two rivers which they feed join at Appledore.

From Beaford Moor the road drops again to Beaford and the vale of the Torridge, a deep wooded valley to the left of the highway. There is one corner, where the road climbs past some quarries towards a cutting through a rocky ridge, where I always pause to look down upon the gleam of the river, seen through the trees, far beneath, and the rolling hills beyond.

In one of their folds lies Potheridge, an inconsiderable place, but the birthplace of a man who might, if he would, have been King of England. George Monk, afterwards Duke of Albemarle, was one of the most interesting and influential of the men of the West Country whom the Civil War brought into the forefront of affairs. He first took up arms for the King, and then, after having been taken prisoner by the Parliamentary Forces, he accepted a command under Cromwell and proceeded to bring peace to Ireland and, subsequently to Scotland, no inconsiderable task at any time. But Monk's chiefest claim to remembrance lies in the fact that it was his astute diplomacy and level-headedness which, at a time when the whole country was sick at heart, and popular government had become nothing but the warring of factions, brought about the Restoration without the shedding of a drop of blood. Monk was a reserved, silent man and was

THE TORRIDGE ABOVE TORRINGTON

well hated by less clever men of both sides, who could not understand his motives, but his name stands high in the list of men of Devon who have deserved well of their country.

Great Torrington is a straggling little town, much spoilt by the speculative builder, but its surroundings are very

WEAR GIFFORD

beautiful. It is ringed by hills, through which the Torridge, now a considerable stream, runs down towards Bideford. Beyond and below the town the road drops to a charming old bridge and thence follows the course of the river.

Nothing ever seems to have happened at Torrington, save a couple of engagements during the Civil War. It was the second of these, fought in the dark amongst the tangle of deep lanes about Torrington, and in the narrow streets of the

THE TORRIDGE AT WEAR GIFFORD

town itself, which sealed the fate of the king's cause in the West Country.

The road from Torrington to Bideford, eight good miles or so in length, is one for a summer's evening. On your right hand the Torridge grows wider as you reach the limit of its tidal flow, and it is edged by broad green alluvial pastures. Beyond them again are pleasant green hills, with comfortable farms and here and there beautiful old houses,

built on their lower slopes. Near Wear Gifford is one such, an Elizabethan manor-house with two gable ends towards the river and a square, ivy-covered tower standing at a little distance. Behind it is a beautiful old church; it must be very peaceful to live there, at the extreme limit of the great tidal flow of the estuary. At Bideford and Appledore the tide is a great potent force, the visible token of the might of the ocean beyond the bar, but here it is only a whisper and a reminder. I should like to live a little while at Wear Gifford.

And then Bideford Bridge again, the running tide aglow with the sunset, and the kindly Devon welcome at the inn.

VILLAGE WORTHIES

INDEX

Abbots Way, 127, 171
Alfred, 185, 186
Alston, 172
Appledore, 19, 33, 44, 45, 58, 78, 79, 80, 92, 93, 94, 95, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 104, 107, 112, 181, 194, 199
Ashburton, 129, 169, 170
Athelstan, 186
Aveton Gifford, 74, 118
Avon, 69, 72, 74, 118
Axe, 34
Axmouth, 34
Aylesbeare, 39, 40, 152

Badgeworthy Water, 138
Baggy Point, 16, 17
Barle, 140
Barnstaple, 12, 78, 92, 93, 98, 99, 104, 105, 106, 157, 173, 191
Bath, 33, 146
Beaford, 194
Beaford Moor, 193, 194
Beer, 3, 35, 36, 47
Beesands, 66
Berry Head, 62
Berry Pomeroy, 44, 117
Bickington, 105
Bideford, 19, 31, 78, 79, 92, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 105, 107, 116, 157, 179, 181, 184, 189, 191, 193, 197, 198, 199
Bigbury, 69, 73, 74
Bigbury Bay, 69
Blackallers Cove, 54
Black Cove, 72
Blackmore, 138
Blackpool, 64, 65
Black Ridge, 137, 138
Bloody Corner, 100, 101
Bolt Head, 68, 73, 74
Bolt Tail, 73, 74
Borough Island, 69
Branscombe, 35, 36, 37, 47
Braunton, 12, 92, 93, 104, 106, 107
Braunton Burrows, 81, 95, 107
" Brave Earth," 145
Bray, 139, 140
Brayford, 140
Bridport, 33
Bristol Channel, 5, 6, 49
Brixham, 53, 54, 55, 57, 58, 60, 61, 62, 63, 164, 187
Broad Clyst, 152
Bruit-ers Stone, 115
Buckfast, 127, 171
Buckfast Abbey, 169, 170, 172
Buckland Abbey, 127
Bucks Cross, 20
Bucks Mills, 20
Bude, 19, 39
Budleigh Salterton, 3, 34, 36, 43, 48 49, 64, 83
Bull Point, 14
Burrow Nose, 11

Castle Rock, 9
Chagford, 129, 133, 134, 137
Challacombe, 139, 140
Challacombe Common, 139, 140, 141
Chard, 33
Charles I, 10, 11, 186
Charles II, 139, 187
Chudleigh, 141

Churchstow, 72
Clavering, 148
Clovelly, 4, 19, 20, 23, 28, 44
Clovelly Cross, 19
Clyst, 85, 92, 152, 159
Clyst Honiton, 152
Clyst St. George, 40, 152
Clyst St. Lawrence, 152
Clyst St. Mary, 40, 152, 159
Cobley, Uncle Tom, 135
Colaton Raleigh, 43, 146, 152
Coleridge, 148
Colyford, 34
Combeinteignhead, 110
Combe Martin, 3, 9, 10, 11
Countess Weir, 85, 92, 158, 182
Countisbury Hill, 33
Cowley, 159
Cowley Bridge, 189
Cranmere, 137
Cranmere Pool, 137, 140
Crediton, 180, 186, 190, 191
Cromwell, 148
Croyde, 3, 16, 17, 18, 44
Croyde Bay, 17
Cullompton, 33

Dart, 43, 63, 77, 79, 110, 137, 157, 159, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 172
Dartmeet, 129, 136, 158, 168, 169
Dartmoor, 44, 58, 121, 123, 124, 125, 127, 128, 129, 130, 134, 137, 138, 140, 141, 144, 145, 146, 147, 166, 167, 170, 171, 175, 184, 185, 191
Dartmouth, 63, 64, 69, 79, 110, 111, 112, 116, 170, 180
Dawlish, 43, 53
Dawlish Warren, 3, 50, 53, 57, 80, 81, 82, 85
Dean Church, 169
Dean Prior, 169
Defoe, 116
Dekker, 173
Denham, 173
Devonport, 79
Dittisham, 115
Doone Valley, 138
Dorchester, 33
Downtor, 126
Drake, Sir Francis, 5, 53, 56, 86, 173, 179
Drake, Maurice, 82
Drake's Island, 79
Drewsteignton, 44, 133, 134
Drizzlecombe, 175
Dulverton, 138, 167
Dunkery Beacon, 138
Dunsford, 130
Dunster, 138

East Budleigh, 152
East Hill, 152
East Portlemouth, 71
Edgar, 173
Edward I, 10, 186
Edward III, 34, 84
Edward the Confessor, 186, 188
Effingham, 56
Eggesford, 167
Elfrida, Lady, 173
Eliot, George, 12
Elizabeth, 10, 11, 165, 182, 186
Erme, 77, 79, 126, 175
Ethelwold, 173
Exe, 43, 50, 53, 56, 57, 77, 79, 80, 85, 92, 107, 109, 141, 143, 144, 145, 147, 157, 158, 159, 160, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 182, 185, 189
Exe Bridge, 92
Exeter, 33, 92, 105, 109, 111, 112, 116, 130, 139, 145, 146, 148, 159, 163, 164, 170, 174, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191
Exford, 138, 139
Exminster, 80
Exmoor, 5, 6, 7, 33, 44, 49, 138, 139, 141, 164, 166
Exmouth, 43, 48, 49, 50, 56, 57, 80, 82, 84, 89, 92, 111

Exton, 138
Eyam, 103

Fairfax, 105, 112, 148, 187
Fairmile, 146
Falmouth, 69
Farnham, 145
Fitz, Mary, 173
Fortibus, Isabel de, 182, 183
Fremington, 105
Frogmore, 118
Frogmore Creek, 73, 118
Frome, 33

Galmpton Creek, 115
Gammon Head, 72
Gissing, George, 91
Gittisham, 44, 152
Gittisham Hill, 152
Glanville, Eulalia, 173
Glastonbury, 33
" Golden Hind," 181
Great Torrington, 191, 193, 197
Grenville, Sir Richard, 5, 99, 101, 102, 180
Grimspound, 125, 129, 135
Guildford, 145

Haldon, 43, 56, 81, 110, 123, 141, 143, 144
Haldon Hill, 84, 141, 144
Halwell, 74
Hamildon Tor, 125
Harpford, 152
Hartland, 3, 19, 20, 23, 28, 29, 31, 32
Hartland Abbey, 27
Hartland Point, 4, 18, 19, 23, 24, 25
Hartland Quay, 23, 26, 28, 32
Hatherleigh, 167
Hayes Barton, 47, 49, 145
Hay Tor, 135, 136
Hemsworthy Gate, 135
Henrietta, Princess, 187
Henrietta Maria, 186
Henry V, 11
Henry VI, 186
Henry VII, 186
Henry VIII, 186
Herrick, Robert, 169
High Bray, 139
Hindhead, 193
Hog's Back, 145
Holne Bridge, 169
Holsworthy, 19
Honiton, 33, 43, 146
Hubba the Dane, 100, 101
Hunter's Inn, 8, 9

Ilchester, 33
Ilfracombe, 11, 12, 64, 105
Instow, 98, 104
Ivybridge, 69

Jonson, Ben, 173

Kingsbridge, 69, 118
Kingsley, 92, 96, 97, 101, 102, 103
Kingswear, 63, 112

Labrador, 54
Ladram Bay, 3, 16, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 46
Land's End, 185
Lane, John, 30
Laughter Tor, 168
Launceston, 116
Lee, 3, 12, 13, 15, 19
Lee Abbey, 9
Lewes, George Henry, 12
Littleham Cove, 36
Lorna Doone, 138
" Lorna Doone," 138
Lundy, 24, 93
Lydcott, 139
Lyde, Robert, 89
Lydford, 137, 174
Lyme Regis, 33, 49, 62
Lympstone, 80, 84
Lyn, 138

Lynmouth, 3, 6, 7, 8, 33, 44, 141
Lynton, 3, 8, 9

Maidencombe, 54
Mamhead, 142
Manor Farm, Mortehoe, 15
Marsland Mouth, 32
Matthew Point, 65
Maurice, Prince, 105
Merripit, 135
Merrivale Bridge, 126, 129
Mew Stone, 73
Millais, 48
Minehead, 33
Monk, George, Duke of Albemarle, 194
Monmouth, Duke of, 33, 62, 187
Moreleigh, 74
Moretonhampstead, 129, 130, 133, 135
Mortehoe, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19
Morte Point, 14
Morte Stone, 14, 15
Mount Batten Point, 79
Mudstone Sands, 63

Nantes, Edict of, 106
Ness, 108
Netherton, 110
Newton Abbot, 110, 141
Newton Ferrers, 118
Newton Poppleford, 43
Newton St. Cyres, 44, 46, 179, 189, 190
Northam, 101
Northam Burrows, 96, 98

Oare, 138
Odda, 100, 101
Okehampton, 137, 173
Okement, 137
Orcombe Point, 49, 83
Otter, 43, 50, 144, 152
Otterton, 34, 37, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47
Ottery St. Mary, 39, 40, 43, 144, 147, 148, 151
Ovis, 139

" Page, of Plymouth," 173
Paignton, 53
Peak Hill, 38, 40, 43, 144, 146
" Pendennis," 148
Pennsylvania Hill, 57, 163
Pepys, Samuel, 106
Phillpotts, Eden, 135
Pierce, Tom, 135
Pig's Nose, 72
Pinhoe, 185, 186
Plym, 175
Plymouth, 68, 74, 78, 79, 116, 128, 141, 171, 180
Plymouth Hoe, 79
Plymouth Sound, 56, 74, 77, 79, 118, 124, 175
Pole Sands, 50, 57
Porlock, 5, 33
Portland Bill, 57, 59
Portlemouth, 71, 72, 73
Port Reeve, 170
Postbridge, 158, 168
Potheridge, 194
Powderham Castle, 80
Prawle Point, 68, 71, 72
Prince, 179
Princetown, 124, 130, 135, 136

Quickbeam Hill, 175
Quivil, Bishop, 188

Rackenford Moor, 166
Raleigh, Sir Walter, 47, 48, 86, 145, 146, 179
Rattenbury, Jack, 35, 36
" Revenge," 181
Richard I, 111
Richard III, 186
Richmond, Earl of, 186
Ridd, Jan, 138
Robin Hood's Bay, 39

Rockham Bay, 14
Rougemont, 180, 185
Runswick Bay, 39
Russell, Lord, 187
Rye, 117

Salcombe, 69, 73, 77
Salcombe Castle, 72
Salcombe Creek, 70, 72
Salcombe Regis, 36
Sampford Peverill, 40
Saunton, 95, 98, 107
Saunton Down, 17, 18
Saunton Sands, 16
Scabbacombe Sands, 63
Scilly Islands, 69
Seaton, 34, 35, 37
Severn, 33
Sexton, Mary, 104
Shakespeare, 47, 49, 115
Shaldon, 109
Shapley, 125
Shapley Tor, 135
Sheppard, A. T., 145, 187
Sidmouth, 33, 36, 37, 38, 64
Slapton, 65
Slapton Ley, 65
Slapton Sands, 63, 65
Southey, 7, 8
South Molton, 32, 139
Starcross, 81, 84, 89, 143
Start Bay, 53, 64, 65, 70
Start Point, 43, 53, 59, 63, 64, 68, 69, 117
St. Ives, 39
Stoke, 23, 28, 30, 159
Stoke Canon, 163
Stoke Fleming, 63, 64
Stoke Gabriel, 112
Straight Point, 49
Strange, John, 103
Stratford-on-Avon, 47, 49

Tamur, 77, 118, 172
Taunton, 33, 185
Tavistock, 129, 159, 172, 173
Tavy, 77, 118, 137, 140, 168, 172, 173
Tavy Cleave, 174
Taw, 18, 77, 79, 92, 93, 98, 104, 108, 109, 137, 157, 159, 166, 167, 168, 191, 193, 194
Teign, 54, 77, 108, 109, 110, 130, 137, 157
Teignmouth, 43, 78, 81, 84, 108, 109, 159
Telegraph Hill, 163
Thackeray, 148
Thurlestone Rock, 69, 73
Tintagel Head, 69
Titus, 62
Tiverton, 163, 165
Topsham, 44, 45, 48, 54, 56, 78, 79, 80, 82, 84, 85, 86, 87, 89, 91, 92, 111, 112, 158, 159, 179, 180, 182, 183, 184
Torquay, 11, 43, 53, 54, 62, 108, 182
Torridge, 18, 77, 79, 92, 93, 98, 103, 107, 108, 109, 157, 159, 167, 168, 193, 194, 197, 198
Torrington, 19, 32, 105, 157, 167, 180, 198
Totnes, 63, 64, 69, 110, 111, 112, 115, 116, 168, 169, 171
Turf, 56, 80, 84, 85, 87
Two Bridges, 129, 136, 137, 158, 168

Umberleigh, 167
Uplyme, 34

Venn Ottery, 43, 152
Vespasian, 62

Warbeck, Perkin, 186, 187
Warwick, the King-maker, 111
Watcombe, 54
Watermouth Castle, 11
Watersmeet, 7
Wear Gifford, 199
Welcombe, 19, 32, 33

Wells, 33
Wembury Bay, 74
Woodbury, 40, 152
Westminster, 102
Westward Ho, 18, 19, 92, 95, 96, 97, 98, 101
" Westward Ho ! " 102, 103
Whitsand Beach, 54
Widecombe-in-the-Moor, 44, 46, 135, 136
Wigford Down, 175
William of Orange, 61, 62, 110, 187
William the Conqueror, 186
Wiltshire Downs, 33
Winkleigh, 191, 192, 193
Winsford, 138
Withycombe Raleigh, 40
Withypool, 138
Wolborough, 110
Woodbury Common, 43, 56, 80, 123, 141, 145, 146, 147, 151, 152, 160, 163, 193
Woodbury Salterton, 152
Woodleigh, 74
Woody Bay, 3, 8, 9
Woolacombe, 3, 13, 15, 16
Wrafton, 106
Wyot, Philip, 99

Yealm, 74, 77, 79
Yealmton, 118
Yelverton, 128, 172
Yes Tor, 145
Yettington, 145, 146
Yeovil, 33

942.35
2